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## Court rules gun maker can be sued over Newtown shooting

**HARTFORD, Conn. (AP)** — Gun-maker Remington can be sued over how it marketed the rifle used to kill 20 children and six educators at Sandy Hook Elementary School in 2012, a divided Connecticut Supreme Court ruled Thursday. Gun control advocates touted the ruling as providing a possible roadmap for victims of other mass shootings to circumvent a long-criticized federal law that shields gun manufacturers from liability in most cases when their products are used in crimes. Gun rights supporters bashed the decision as judicial activism and overreach. In a 4-3 decision, justices reinstated a wrongful death

lawsuit against Remington and overturned the ruling of a lower court judge, who said the entire lawsuit was prohibited by the 2005 federal law. The majority said that while most of the lawsuit's claims were barred by the federal law, Remington could still be sued for alleged wrongful marketing under Connecticut law. "The regulation of advertising that threatens the public's health, safety, and morals has long been considered a core exercise of the states' police powers," Justice Richard Palmer wrote for the majority, adding he didn't believe Congress envisioned complete immunity for gun-makers.

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In this Jan. 28, 2013, file photo, firearms training unit Detective Barbara J. Mattson, of the Connecticut State Police, holds a Bushmaster AR-15 rifle, the same make and model used by Adam Lanza in the 2012 Sandy Hook School shooting, during a hearing at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford, Conn.

Associated Press

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Ian Hockley, center, father of Sandy Hook Elementary School student Dylan Hockley, and Bill Sherlach, right, husband of Sandy Hook Elementary School psychologist Mary Sherlach, look on as attorney Josh Koskoff speaks a news conference in Bridgeport, Conn. Thursday, March 14, 2019.

Associated Press

**NEWTOWN SHOOTING**  
Continued from Front

Several lawsuits over mass shootings in other states have been rejected because of the federal law. The plaintiffs in Connecticut include a survivor and relatives of nine people killed in the massacre. They argue the Bushmaster AR-15-style rifle used by Newtown shooter Adam Lanza is too dangerous for

the public and Remington glorified the weapon in marketing it to young people, including those with mental illness. Remington, based in Madison, North Carolina, has denied wrongdoing and previously insisted it can't be sued because of the 2005 law, called the Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act. A Remington spokesman said Thursday

the company had no comment on the court ruling. "We have no timeline for any comments to be made on the subject," spokesman Eric Suarez wrote in an email to The Associated Press. James Vogts, a lawyer for Remington, has cited the 2005 federal law and previously said the Bushmaster rifle is a legal firearm used by millions of people for hunting, self-de-

fense and target shooting. Lanza, 20, shot his way into the locked school in Newtown on Dec. 14, 2012, and killed 20 first-graders and six educators with a Bushmaster XM15-E2S rifle, similar to an AR-15. He shot his mother to death in their Newtown home beforehand, and killed himself as police arrived at the school. Connecticut's child advocate said Lanza's severe and deteriorating mental health problems, his preoccupation with violence and access to his mother's legal weapons "proved a recipe for mass murder." Nicole Hockley, whose 6-year-old son Dylan died in the shooting, said Thursday that a main goal of the lawsuit is to stop Remington and other gun makers from gearing their advertising toward troubled young men. "We have always said our case is about reckless sales and marketing to disturbed youth," Hockley said. "We wanted our day in court. This is a step forward to ensure that manufacturers like Remington are not allowed to keep targeting people who are at risk." A gun industry group, the National Shooting Sports Foundation, which happens to

be based in Newtown, said the state Supreme Court ruling was an "overly broad interpretation" of an exception to the 2005 federal law. "The majority's decision today is at odds with all other state and federal appellate courts that have interpreted the scope of the exception," the group said in a statement, adding it "respectfully disagrees with and is disappointed by the court's majority decision." A spokeswoman for the National Rifle Association declined to comment. Joshua Koskoff, a lawyer for the plaintiffs, has said the Bushmaster rifle and other AR-15-style rifles were designed as military killing machines and should never have been sold to the public. He accuses Remington of targeting younger, at-risk males through "militaristic marketing and astute product placement in violent first-person shooter games." "The families' goal has always been to shed light on Remington's calculated and profit-driven strategy to expand the AR-15 market and court high-risk users, all at the expense of Americans' safety," Koskoff said Thursday.

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**THE CASINO AT THE RITZ-CARLTON**

**Continued from Previous Page**  
"Today's decision is a critical step toward achieving that goal."

The lawsuit seeks undisclosed damages.

Military-style rifles have been used in many other mass shootings, including in Las Vegas in October 2017 when 58 people were killed and hundreds more injured. The case was watched by gun rights supporters and gun control advocates across the country as one that could affect other cases accusing gun-makers of being responsible for mass shootings. Several groups, ranging from the NRA to emergency room doctors, submitted briefs to the court.

The 2005 federal law has been cited by other courts that rejected lawsuits against gun makers and dealers in other high-profile shooting attacks, including the 2012 Colorado movie theater shooting and the Washington, D.C., sniper shootings in 2002.

Robert J. Spitzer, chairman of political science

at the State University of New York at Cortland and an expert on guns and the Second Amendment, said the Connecticut ruling runs counter to the 2005 federal law. Even though the court allowed the case to proceed, he said, there still be a very high bar for successfully suing Remington.

"The likelihood they'll succeed is small," he said.

Still, allowing the lawsuit to move forward means that there will be an opportunity for discovery that would unearth company documents that could be embarrassing for Remington. Since gunmakers have in recent history been shielded from litigation, company officials may have felt emboldened to openly discuss tactics, marketing strategies and other revealing details about business dealings.

Remington filed for bankruptcy reorganization last year amid years of slumping sales and legal and financial pressure over the Sandy Hook school massacre. □



Attorney Josh Koskoff speaks at a press conference in Bridgeport, Conn. Thursday, March 14, 2019. Associated Press



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## Trump sharply criticizes British leader's handling of Brexit



President Donald Trump, second from right, talks with, from left, Rep. Richard Neal, D-Mass., Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi of Calif., and Rep. Peter King, D-N.Y., as he arrives on Capitol Hill in Washington, Thursday, March 14, 2019, to have lunch.

Associated Press

By **DARLENE SUPERVILLE**  
 Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — President Donald Trump on Thursday sharply criticized Britain's handling of negotiations over leaving the European Union, saying the talks have been bungled and that the debate was dividing the country.

"I'm surprised at how badly it's all gone from the standpoint of a negotiation," he said.

Trump, who holds himself up as a master deal-maker, said he had given Prime Minister Theresa May his ideas on how she could negotiate a successful deal for leaving the 28-member group of nations. But "she didn't listen to that and that's fine. I mean she's got to do what she's got to do," he said at the White House as he welcomed Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar for an early St. Patrick's Day celebration.

"I think it could have been negotiated in a different

manner, frankly," Trump said. "I hate to see it being, everything being ripped apart right now."

Trump spoke hours before British lawmakers voted to delay Brexit for at least three months. Britain's exit from the EU had been scheduled for March 29. The motion commits May's government to seek an extension until June 30 if Parliament approves a U.K.-EU withdrawal deal next week.

Trump predicted later Thursday that the situation eventually would work itself out. The president said he and Varadkar discussed the issue during their Oval Office meeting. Varadkar opposes Britain's EU exit and expressed concern about how such a move would affect Northern Ireland.

"We talked about Brexit, something that's turning out to be a little more complex than they thought it would be," Trump said at an annual Capitol Hill luncheon for the Irish hosted by the House speaker. "But it'll all work out. Everything does. One way or the other, it's going to work out."

Varadkar was returning to the White House for an evening reception and the presentation of a bowl of shamrocks to Trump. The openly gay prime minister and his partner, Matthew Barrett, started the day as the breakfast guests of Vice President Mike Pence, a conservative Christian who opposes gay rights. □

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**Wet winter ends California drought after 376 straight weeks**

LOS ANGELES (AP) — California is free of drought for the first time in more than seven years and only a small amount of its territory remains abnormally dry as a very wet winter winds down, experts said Thursday.

More than 93 percent of the state is free of drought or dryness, and areas of abnormal dryness along the Oregon border and in parts of four southern counties amount to less than 7 percent of the state, the U.S. Drought Monitor said in its weekly update.

The conditions in the far south are because of very dry prior years, the monitor said, noting reservoirs in San Diego County are at only 65 percent of capacity. Abnormal dryness describes an area either entering drought or emerging from it, but below the four tiers of drought.

California is drought-free for the first time since Dec. 20, 2011, said the National Drought Mitigation Center at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, which jointly produces the monitor with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric

Administration.

"The state had experienced some form of drought for 376 consecutive weeks," the center tweeted.

The state came close to being drought-free in soggy 2017 when it was whittled down to less than 9 percent of the state and then-Gov. Jerry Brown lifted an emergency declaration intended to conserve water.

But since then paltry precipitation had raised concern about the water supply and a rethinking of how it is used, especially for landscaping.

The change this year has been dramatic. On Jan. 1, more than 75 percent of California was in some level of drought and less than 8 percent was entirely free.

Storms since have been a boon to water supplies as well as skiers and snowboarders as the snowpack deepened in the Sierra Nevada and in other ranges, but they have also brought problems including river flooding that swamped much of the Sonoma County wine country town of Guerneville.

Heavy downpours caused millions in damage to highways in the San Jacinto

Mountains east of Los Angeles, and state transportation officials said this week they expect the routes to remain closed for four more months.

Yosemite National Park announced there will be late seasonal openings of facilities because of extensive damage from the exceptionally heavy snowpack. The park also said rivers and streams are expected to swell when snowmelt begins, posing hazards to visitors. □



In this photo released Wednesday, March 13, 2019, by the National Park Service, is a damaged building after the recent heavy snowpack in Yosemite National Park, Calif.

Associated Press

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## Reputed Gambino crime boss shot to death in New York City

By **MICHAEL R. SISAK** and **TOM HAYS**

**NEW YORK (AP)** — The reputed boss of New York's Gambino crime family was shot to death in front of his home by a gunman who may have staged a car accident to lure him outside, dying a virtual unknown compared with his swaggering 1980s-era predecessor, John Gotti.

Police said Thursday they were reviewing surveillance-camera video of the attack on Francesco "Franky Boy" Cali, 53, who was gunned down Wednesday night at his red-brick colonial-style house in a quiet Staten Island neighborhood. The assailant sped off in a pickup truck, police said. No immediate arrests were made.

The motive for the attack was under investigation, police said. Chief of Detectives Dermot Shea said it was still an open question whether it was a mob hit.

Aggressive federal prosecutions in the past 25 years decimated the ranks of New York's five Mafia families. The cases resulted in long prison terms for their bosses — Gotti included — and encouraged their successors to keep a lower profile.

But the new generation still engages in old-school crimes — loansharking, gambling, extortion — that can make enemies and spark bloodshed.

Shea said there has been a slight uptick in alleged mob-related violence in New York within the last year. But he said it is too soon to say whether that



Crime scene investigators load a car that appears to have been checked for fingerprints onto a flatbed truck in the Staten Island borough of New York, Thursday, March 14, 2019.

Associated Press

had anything to do with Cali's slaying.

The mobster emerged from his home around 9:15 p.m. after the gunman backed his pickup into Cali's Cadillac SUV, damaging it, according to police. "With what we know at this point in time, it's quite possible that was part of a plan," Shea said.

Video showed the assailant pulling a 9 mm handgun and opening fire on Cali about a minute after they started talking, according to Shea. At least 12 shots were fired. After getting shot several times, Cali tried to crawl under his SUV to hide, Shea said.

Federal prosecutors referred to Cali in court filings in recent years as the underboss of the Mafia's Gambino family, once one of the most powerful and feared crime organizations

in the country. News accounts since 2015 said he had ascended to the top spot.

The last Mafia boss to be rubbed out in New York City was Gambino don "Big Paul" Castellano, assassinated at Gotti's direction while getting out of a black limousine outside a high-end Manhattan steakhouse in 1985. Gotti then took control of the family.

"We thought those days were over," Mayor Bill de Blasio said of Cali's slaying. "Very surprising, but I guess old habits die hard."

Jerry Capeci, a mob expert who writes for the ganglandnews.com website, cautioned that the killing "doesn't have the feel" of a Mafia-sanctioned hit.

"Frank Cali was a pretty likable guy, and also this is not a way the mob would kill one of their own," he

said, arguing that the Mafia would frown on killing someone in front of his home. He also said there was some uncertainty about whether Cali was the boss or underboss.

Cali kept a much lower profile than Gotti and was killed in far less spectacular fashion than Castellano. He was shot on a tree-lined street in one of New York City's less-glamorous outer boroughs, a short walk from ball fields, a country club and a day camp.

Gotti, with his expensive double-breasted suits and overcoats and silvery swept-back hair, became known as the Dapper Don, his smiling face all over the tabloids. As prosecutors tried and failed to bring him down, he came to be called the Teflon Don.

In 1992, Gotti was convicted in Castellano's murder

and a multitude of other crimes. He was sentenced to life in prison and died of cancer in 2002.

On Wednesday, hours before Cali was killed, the reputed boss and consigliere of the Bonanno crime family were acquitted in a Brooklyn racketeering and extortion case. In October, reputed Bonanno associate Sylvester Zottola was fatally shot while waiting for a cup of coffee at a McDonald's drive-thru in the Bronx. Also this week, prosecutors in Brooklyn announced a case against a Gambino associate accused of killing a suspected loanshark affiliated with the Lucchese crime family.

Last week, the longtime boss of the Colombo crime family, 85-year-old Carmine "the Snake" Persico, died at a North Carolina hospital near the federal prison where he had been serving what was effectively a life sentence. Persico was convicted in a 1986 case overseen by then-U.S. Attorney Rudy Giuliani.

Cali's only mob-related criminal conviction came a decade ago, when he pleaded guilty in an extortion scheme involving a failed attempt to build a NASCAR track on Staten Island. He was sentenced to 16 months behind bars and was released in 2009.

In that case, authorities intercepted conversations shedding light on his quiet underworld command. At a 2008 bail hearing, a prosecutor said Cali was seen "as a man of influence and power by organized crime members in Italy." □

# NYC mayor: Extend shoreline to protect city from storms

By KAREN MATTHEWS  
Associated Press

**NEW YORK (AP)** — New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio announced a plan Thursday to meet the "existential threat" of climate change by extending a section of the lower Manhattan coastline as much as 500 feet (152 meters) into the East River.

The Democratic mayor said the \$10 billion effort to protect lower Manhattan from flooding by extending the shoreline between the Brooklyn Bridge and the Battery will be funded partly by private development if federal funds are not available.

"If there's federal money in play it probably looks one way," de Blasio said. "If there's not federal money in play, we have to get some private money into it and there has to be some development."

Officials have been developing schemes to fortify New York City's waterfront since Superstorm Sandy destroyed thousands of homes and businesses in 2012.

De Blasio said it will cost about \$500 million to fortify most of lower Manhattan from future effects of climate change, including rising sea levels and intense precipitation, with grassy berms and removable barriers.

But planners determined that protecting the lowest-lying area, including South Street Seaport and the financial district, will require adding more land over several years.

De Blasio, who is contemplating joining the crowded field of 2020 Democrat-

ic presidential candidates, said the \$10 billion landfill project should be supported by federal funds, but that's unlikely to happen during the administration of Republican President Donald Trump.

"Lower Manhattan is one of the core centers of the American economy," he said. "It's where the financial capital of the United States is. The security of lower Manhattan should be a national priority. The fact is it is not. And it's incomprehensible to me that there's no sense of urgency from the federal government."

He added, "We can't afford to bury our head in the sand and that's right now what our federal government is doing."

The plan to extend the coastline will go through the city's environmental review process, de Blasio said, but he hopes to avoid "the endless dragging on that usually accompanies something of this scale."

But the prospect of private development on the newly built land is sure to meet resistance from downtown Manhattan community members.

City Council member Margaret Chin, who represents the area, said the more resilient future "cannot be paid for by private real estate development that would destroy the waterfront neighborhoods that we are trying to protect."

De Blasio announced the climate resilience plan at a news conference after previewing it in New York magazine.

He said a study undertaken by his office and others has determined that if the city

does not prepare for climate change, rising seas will expose 20 percent of lower Manhattan to daily flooding by 2100.

"This is the existential threat," de Blasio said. "This is the core issue we all must face as aggressively as humanly possible." □



In this Oct. 19, 2017 file photo, a boat crosses New York Harbor in front of the Manhattan skyline.

Associated Press

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# UK seeks to slam the brakes on Brexit, but what comes next?

By JILL LAWLESS  
Associated Press

**LONDON (AP)** — British lawmakers are trying to put the brakes on Brexit — at least for now. The U.K. Parliament voted Thursday 413 to 202 to ask the European Union to delay the U.K.'s exit from the bloc beyond the scheduled date of March 29.

The vote comes a day after U.K. lawmakers committed Britain to staying in the EU unless a divorce deal is ratified. With the approaching deadline intensifying fears that Britain could leave the bloc without a deal — a move that economists say could spark economic turmoil — the U.K. Parliament voted Wednesday to rule out the possibility of a no-deal Brexit.

However, the final say on whether to grant Britain a delay rests with leaders of the 27 remaining EU nations.

A look at what might happen next:

## DELAY, DELAY, DELAY

After a series of Parliamentary defeats, British Prime Minister Theresa May



A pro-Brexit leave the European Union supporter takes part in a protest outside the House of Parliament in London, Wednesday, March 13, 2019.

Associated Press

grudgingly gave lawmakers a chance to delay Brexit. This option proved popular, since politicians on both sides of the Brexit debate fear that time is running out to secure an orderly withdrawal by March 29.

May wants to get an extension until June 30 — but only if she can get Parliament to back her Brexit deal in a third vote by March 20. May's proposed Brexit deal has been defeated twice already by lawmakers.

If it is defeated again, May says Britain will have to seek

a long extension, with the risk that opponents of Brexit will use that time to soften the terms of departure or even overturn Britain's decision to leave.

## WHAT'S THE EU'S PART IN THIS?

A Brexit extension requires approval from all 27 remaining EU member countries. They have an opportunity to grant such a request at a March 21-22 summit in Brussels.

But the rest of the EU is reluctant to postpone Brexit

beyond the May 23-26 election for the EU's legislature. The U.K. won't be represented in the European Parliament after it quits the EU; its seats already have been given to other countries to fill in the May election.

The bloc may be open to a long delay, however, to allow Britain to radically change course. European Council President Donald Tusk tweeted Thursday he will appeal to EU leaders "to be open to a long extension if the U.K. finds it necessary to rethink its Brexit strategy and build consensus about it."

## NO CLEAR ROUTE OUT OF BRITAIN'S POLITICAL CRISIS

Parliament's votes this week won't end Britain's Brexit crisis. Both lawmakers and the public remain split between backers of a clean break from the EU and those who favor continuing a close relationship, either through a post-Brexit trade deal or by reversing the June 2016 decision to leave.

May is unwilling to abandon her hard-won divorce deal with the EU, which sets

out the terms of Britain's withdrawal and the outline of future relations with the bloc.

Her Conservative government is holding talks with its Northern Irish political allies and pro-Brexit backbench lawmakers to see if they will abandon their opposition to a deal they fear keeps Britain too closely tied to the bloc.

If May's Brexit deal is defeated in a vote next week, the government says lawmakers will get to vote on several different options for Brexit to see if there is a majority for any of them.

Opposition politicians think the only way forward is an early election that could rearrange Parliament and break the political deadlock. May has ruled that out, but could come to see it as her only option.

And anti-Brexit campaigners haven't abandoned the idea of a new referendum on remaining in the EU. There's currently no majority for that in Parliament. A motion calling for a second referendum was defeated by a thumping 334-85 vote on Thursday. □

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## EU parliament leader under fire for praising Mussolini

**MILAN (AP)** — European Parliament President Antonio Tajani apologized Thursday for remarks interpreted as praise for Italian dictator Benito Mussolini and insisted he is "a committed anti-fascist."

Tajani, who is a member of Silvio Berlusconi's center-right Forza Italia party, came under fire after telling Radio 24 on Wednesday evening that before Mussolini "declared war on the entire world, following Hitler, until he promoted the racial laws," the dictator did some "positive things," such as improving infrastructure.

After an outcry in Italy and abroad, including calls for his resignation, Tajani shot back on Twitter, saying it

was disgraceful that his comments had been "manipulated." He later apologized for his remarks in a statement issued by his office in Strasbourg.

He said his comments were not intended to "play down an anti-democratic and totalitarian regime."

"I have always been wholeheartedly anti-fascist," Tajani said. "I have always stressed that Mussolini and fascism were the darkest chapter in the history of the past century."

Tajani was the target of criticism for his initial comments on Mussolini from a wide range of sectors, including European Commission Vice-President Franz Timmermans and Human Rights Watch. □



# Why France is analyzing Ethiopian jet's black boxes

By ANGELA CHARLTON  
Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — France doesn't see an unusually large number of aviation disasters, but its plane crash investigators are world famous.

The French air accident investigation authority, known by its French acronym BEA, is now handling the analysis of the flight recorders from the Ethiopian Airlines jet that crashed after takeoff earlier this week, killing 157 people.

Ethiopian authorities wanted European investigators to handle the analysis because of its complexity, according to BEA spokesman Sebastien Barthe. They initially asked Germany, which said it didn't have the necessary capacity to take it on, so then the Ethiopians turned to France,

Barthe told The Associated Press.

And the BEA said yes. The French agency, based in the Paris suburb of Le Bourget, has extensive experience in investigating crashes and other incidents involving commercial flights. The BEA notably helps with investigations in countries without the resources or equipment to analyze the flight recorders, often called the black boxes.

BEA investigators are also often called upon when an Airbus plane has a problem anywhere in the world, because the aviation manufacturer is based in France. This time the plane was a Boeing, whose popular 737 Max 8 model has been grounded or barred from air space in more than 40 countries pending investi-



Two men carry suitcases containing the flight recorders from the Ethiopian jet, into the French air accident investigation authority, Thursday, March 14, 2019 Le Bourget, north of Paris.

Associated Press

gation into what caused Sunday's crash.

The National Transportation Safety Board in the U.S., where Boeing is based, said it will send three investigators to France to help download and analyze the flight recorders. NTSB inves-

tigators have also been sent to Ethiopia to help with the investigation.

Aviation safety experts say it's standard procedure for the country where a crash occurred to lead the investigation and decide where the flight data and voice

recorders will be analyzed. Smaller countries, like Ethiopia, don't have the equipment to read damaged recorders, so they get to choose where they want that done. In this case, Ethiopia picked France, but not the U.S., which certified the airworthiness of the 737 Max jets.

Peter Goelz, a former managing director of the NTSB who is now an aviation consultant, said Ethiopian investigators likely avoided sending the data to the U.S. because its Federal Aviation Administration certified the airworthiness of the Max and has a relationship with manufacturer Boeing. The FAA's reluctance to ground the planes when most of the world already had done so might also have played a role, Goelz added. □



This photo provided on Thursday March 14, 2019 by the Marine Nationale, shows the Grimaldi vessel Grande America on fire in the Bay of Biscay, off the west coast of France, Monday March 11, 2019.

Associated Press

## France tries to contain fuel spill off Atlantic Coast

Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — French authorities are working to contain a fuel spill off the Atlantic Coast after an Italian container ship sank following a fire.

French and British rescue teams saved all 27 people aboard the Grande America after it sank Tuesday, according to a French government statement. Images released Thursday by the French navy showed flames and plumes of black smoke spewing from the ship as it listed sharply. The regional maritime au-

thority says the ship has since leaked fuel over an area of about 10 kilometers (6 miles) long and one kilometer wide. The ship was carrying about 2,200 tons of fuel before the accident, the French government minister in charge of the environment, Francois de Rugy, told BFM television Thursday.

A French cleanup ship was expected in the area Thursday. France has also reached out to the European Maritime Security Agency for help using satellites to locate leaks. □

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# IS militants, families surrender after offensive in Syria

By PHILIP ISSA

**BAGHOUZ, Syria (AP)** — U.S.-backed Syrian fighters said Thursday a "large number" of Islamic State militants and their families are surrendering a day after intense fighting in the last speck of land the extremists still hold in eastern Syria. At the edge of Baghouz, the village where the militants are still holed up, men, women and children climbed a road that winds along a cliff overlooking what remains of a tent encampment, heading out. Members of the Syrian Democratic Forces said they searched the evacuees as they reached the front lines.

Many of the people carried rolls of blankets and clothes but cast them aside as they made their way up the hill. Women carried babies as children slowly made their way up the rocky terrain. Most of the men appeared to be wounded, with many limping or walking with



A woman and her children, who left the besieged Islamic State-held village of Baghouz, Syria, scramble over a rocky hillside to be checked by U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces Thursday, March 14, 2019.

Associated Press

crutches, and they carried little aside from water bottles. Women were weighted down with duffel and plastic bags, and children holding onto their arms

or to the black robes they wore. The sound of sporadic gunfire echoed off the cliff and U.S.-led coalition planes flew overhead.

SDF spokesman Mustafa Bali said after an intensive offensive Wednesday from multiple fronts, "a large number" of IS militants and their families "started to sur-

render" early Thursday. The U.N. said in a Wednesday report that some 7,000 new evacuees are expected to arrive at an already overpopulated displaced people's camp to the north over the next few days.

The SDF forces said the militants took advantage of dusty and windy conditions a day earlier to launch multiple counterattacks. The U.S.-backed forces fought back, repelling the offensive and apparently triggering the latest evacuation.

Windy conditions continued on Thursday, and SDF commanders inspected front-line positions early in the day.

A day after heavy bombing and clashes, it was quiet Thursday. By early afternoon, it began drizzling. The battle to retake Baghouz and surrounding villages began in September, but has been paused on a number of occasions to allow civilians out. □

# Attacks could reverse gains in Congo's Ebola fight, says WHO

By JAMEY KEATEN

KRISTA LARSON

**GENEVA (AP)** — Attacks on Ebola treatment centers in eastern Congo threaten to reverse the gains being made against the current outbreak of the deadly virus, the director-general of the World Health Organization said Thursday as a fourth assault on a health center was reported.

Nearly 600 people have died from Ebola in the volatile region, making it the second most deadly in history. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, who has just returned from a visit to the affected areas in Congo, insisted that efforts to contain Ebola are succeeding. He said that the WHO hopes the outbreak will be brought to an end in the next six months.

His optimistic assessment Thursday starkly contrasted to one offered last week by the head of Doctors Without Borders, which has had to pull out of two Ebola centers following attacks.



WHO Director-General, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus visits an Ebola treatment centre in Butembo, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Saturday March 9, 2019.

Associated Press

Eastern Congo is home to a myriad of armed groups, and the Ebola epidemic has deepened the political and economic grievances of many in the area.

Doctors Without Borders said over the last several weeks that some 43 percent of new cases in the epicenter towns of Katwa and Butembo had no

known links to other cases. That means the vigorous efforts to track the contacts of the sick are not entirely successful. And more than 40 percent

of the deaths are still taking place in communities rather than at Ebola treatment centers. The bodies of victims are highly contagious, and the aid group said that figure shows community mistrust is still widespread.

Tedros told journalists in Geneva that a much larger crisis has been averted: Ebola has been contained to eastern Congo without spreading across the massive Central African nation or crossing borders into neighboring countries.

"Despite the incredibly difficult situation the outbreak has been contained in 11 out of the 28 communities that have had cases," Tedros said.

"You cannot say it's failing when the outbreak is contracting," he added.

Doctors Without Borders described conditions at the epicenter in Congo as "toxic," saying that government security forces were complicating the effort by trying to force people into treatment centers. □



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## Kazakh activist decries official pressure in China spat

By NATALIYA VASILYEVA  
MOSCOW (AP) — A prominent activist from Kazakhstan who is campaigning for the release of ethnic Kazakhs in China says he was forced to sign blank documents while under house arrest.

Serikzhan Bilash, head of the advocacy group Atajurt, was accused of "inciting ethnic hatred" and placed under house arrest in the Kazakh capital of Astana earlier this week, although the charges against him have not been officially announced.

The detention of possibly over a million Uighurs, Kazakhs and other ethnic minorities in Chinese internment camps has raised acute concerns in Kazakhstan, which heavily relies on trade with neighboring China. Bilash's group has been actively supporting relatives of those detained. Bilash said in an audio message relayed by his lawyer, Aiman Umarova, that unknown officials visited his place late on Wednesday and pressured him into signing blank documents. "They told me that if you want a lenient verdict, we

can help you," Bilash said in the recording. "I had to sign several documents they wanted me to, some of them were blank."

Bilash did not specify what exactly he was forced to sign but said he signed an application to take a state-appointed attorney to replace Umanova.

Umanova told The Associated Press on Thursday she is expected to be granted a visit with Bilash next week. A leading voice campaigning for ethnics Kazakhs in China, Bilash has tried to steer clear of any public protests that could be construed as criticism of the Kazakh government, focusing instead on helping the Kazakhs trapped in the Chinese internment camps.

But the activist, who is originally from China's far western region of Xinjiang, has come under pressure from authorities in recent months. A court last month found Bilash guilty of illegally leading an unregistered organization and fined him the equivalent of \$666. Shortly before being placed under house arrest, he reported being followed by unknown men.

Bilash and his group's vigorous campaign to shed the light on the plight of ethnic minorities in China have been "a thorn in the side of Kazakhstan's government since it began operating," says Sean Roberts, director of the International Development Studies Program at the George Washington University.

Most of Atajurt's members are ethnic Kazakhs from China who were encouraged to repatriate to Kazakhstan decades ago by President Nursultan Nazarbayev's government.

Official pressure on Bilash and his group could backfire at a time when the nation faces economic problems.

"This is all the more politically dangerous at a time when domestic dissatisfaction about economic progress and social services in Kazakhstan is on the rise and there is on-going discussion in the country about presidential succession as Nazarbayev ages," Roberts said.

Kazakhstan has accommodated Beijing on sensitive ethnic issues in the past when it extradited ethnic



In this March 29, 2018, photo, Serikzhan Bilash, a prominent activist campaigning against Chinese internment camps, gestures as he speaks to The Associated Press at a restaurant in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

Associated Press

Uighurs to China, but going after ethnic Kazakhs under pressure from China could potentially put the government in a fraught position. "For many ethnic Kazakh

nationalists, suppressing the voices of Kazakhs at the bequest of the Chinese could be portrayed as tantamount to treason," Roberts said. □

## Pedestrian bridge collapses in Mumbai, 5 killed and 36 hurt

NEW DELHI (AP) — A pedestrian bridge connecting a train station with a road collapsed in Mumbai on Thursday, killing at least five people and injuring more than 30, police said.

Police officer Praveen Satpal said 36 injured people were hospitalized, some in serious condition. Some motorists who were driving under the bridge when it collapsed were among the injured, the Press Trust of In-

dia news agency reported. An audit of the bridge's safety was carried out last year, said Maharashtra state Education Minister Vinod Tawde. He told reporters that some minor damage was detected and had not been repaired before the collapse of the bridge.

Thousands of commuters have used the 39-year-old bridge daily to reach Mumbai's bustling Chhatrapati

Shivaji Maharaj Terminus railway station.

Maharashtra state's top elected leader, Devendra Fadnavis, ordered an inquiry into the collapse of the structure.

In 2017, a stampede broke out on a crowded pedestrian bridge connecting two railway stations in Mumbai, India's financial and entertainment capital, killing at least 22 people and injuring 32. □

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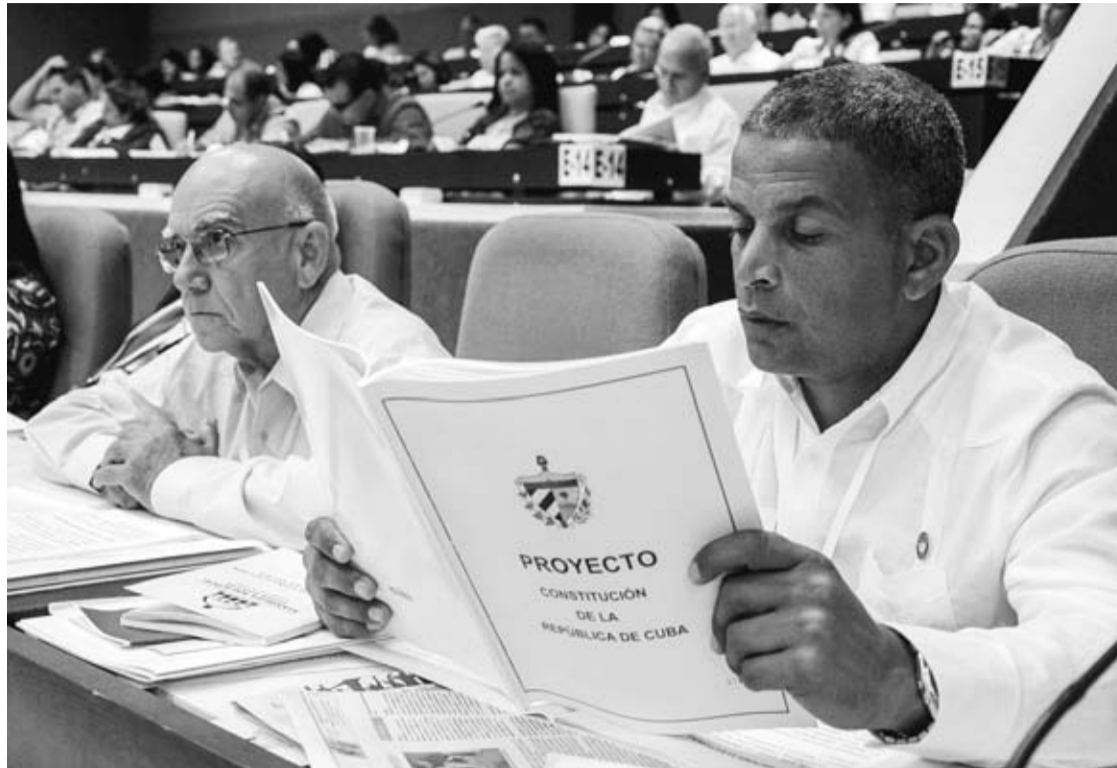
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# Amid crisis, Cuba plans revamp of state and legal system

By **ANDREA RODRIGUEZ**

**HAVANA (AP)** — In the midst of a regional crisis over Venezuela and tough economic straits, the Cuban government is about to launch a sweeping makeover of its centrally planned, single-party system with dozens of new laws that could reshape everything from criminal justice to the market economy.

Nearly a year of debate and discussion ended last month with the approval of Cuba's first constitutional reform since 1976. Some observers see the new constitution as a merely cosmetic update aimed at assuring one of the world's last communist systems won't get another revamp until long after the passing of its founding fathers, now in their late 80s and early 90s. Others see the potential for a slow-moving but deep set of changes that will speed the modernization of Cuba's economically stagnant authoritarian



In this July 21, 2018 photo, a member of the National Assembly studies the proposed constitutional update in Havana, Cuba.

Associated Press

bureaucracy. Cuban legal experts told The Associated Press that they expect the government to send the National Assembly between 60 and 80 new laws over the next

two years to replace ones rendered obsolete by the new constitution. The assembly is virtually certain to unanimously approve all government proposals, as it has for decades.

"I expect to see big changes in Cuba with the new constitution," said Julio Antonio Fernandez, a constitutional law professor at the University of Havana. "A new state structure, a trans-

formed political system, led by the Communist Party, of course, but different and confronting big challenges."

One of the first changes will be in Cuba's political system. Within five months, the government is required to pass a new electoral law that splits the roles of head of state and government between the current president and the new post of prime minister. A new set of governors will replace the Communist Party first secretaries as the highest official in Cuba's 15 provinces.

While the Communist Party remains the only permitted political group, the wording of the new constitution could allow voters to choose between various candidates rather than simply voting yes or no for a candidate pre-selected by a government commission, experts said.

A new business law could create a formal role for small- and medium-sized businesses. □

# Brazil remembers slain politician 1 year after her death

ANNA JEAN KAISER

Associated Press

**RIO DE JANEIRO (AP)** — Tearful friends, family and admirers gathered in Rio de Janeiro on Thursday to pay homage to a black city councilwoman who was gunned down one year ago in a brazen slaying that has sparked nationwide outrage.

Marielle Franco and her driver, Anderson Gomes, were killed in central Rio on the evening of March 14, 2018 while returning from an event focused on empowering young black women.

Authorities this week arrested two former police officers for the murders, but the case continues to highlight deep corruption in Brazil and there are unanswered questions about who ordered the hit and why.

"It is my worst nightmare to be participating in the mass paying homage to my assassinated daughter," said Franco's father, Antonio



Posters showing councilwoman Marielle Franco with messages that read in Portuguese: "Who ordered the killing of Marielle," and "We will not be stopped," are displayed at the site where Franco was gunned down, during a demonstration marking the one year anniversary of her death, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Thursday, March 14, 2019.

Associated Press

Francisco da Silva Neto, at a commemoration service. Vigils, lectures and protests were also planned for Franco in Stockholm, Buenos Ai-

res, Madrid, Bogota, Lisbon, Berlin, London and several cities in the United States. In Rio de Janeiro, some placed flowers in a line

of vases, lit candles and demanded accountability with a banner that read "Justice for Marielle and Anderson." □

Commemorations then continued with a service at a Catholic Church in downtown Rio, where followers of Afro-Brazilian religions wore traditional white garb, sang chants, and held signs reading "Marielle is present" and "For black mothers."

Franco's mother, Marinete da Silva, said her daughter had "become a symbol of resistance all over the world."

Many also took to the streets to celebrate black, female politicians who won post during October elections. Several of them had been on Franco's staff.

Elected in 2016, Franco was a member of the left-leaning Socialism and Liberty Party and was known for her work in shantytowns and her outspokenness against police violence, which disproportionately affects black residents in a country where more than 50 percent of people identify as black or mixed-race. □

# LOCAL



## Aruba Celebrates Green and Blue long Weekend

**ORANJESTAD/PALM BEACH** – It will be a long, green and blue weekend! Sunday is St. Patrick’s Day, celebrated mainly in the hotels and bars that are popular by Americans. The color that represents this day is green. Monday is a holiday and the Day of the National Anthem and Flag, in Papiamentu Dia di Himno y Bandera. You will see a lot of blue this day, the blue color of the flag to be precisely. Dive into these colorful festivities, you will enjoy!

### St. Patrick’s Day

St Patrick’s Day, on March 17, remembers one of Ireland’s patron saints, St Patrick. It largely celebrates Irish-American culture in the United States. This day

is the traditional death date of Saint Patrick (c. AD 385–461), and although he was not born Irish, he has become an important part of the Irish heritage, mostly through his service across Ireland in the 5th century. Celebrations within the United States concentrate on Irish themed parties, drinks and food. Many people get into the spirit by dressing in green clothing and eating green colored food. Irish clubs and pubs often hold parties or have special deals. Large street parades mark St Patrick’s Day in places like: Savannah, Chicago, Boston, Houston, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Denver, Detroit, Toronto, New York, New Orleans and Seattle. Water is

dyed green in public places in some towns. The most notable body of water that was dyed green was the Chicago River in 2005. Many stories are told in connection with St. Patrick. The three-leaf clover was said to be used by the saintly bishop to explain the Trinity to the pagans, which is why it is such a common St. Patrick’s Day symbol today. Another legend has Patrick driving all the snakes out of Ireland; snakes were a popular symbol among the Irish pagans. He is certainly one of the most revered saints in the Catholic Church. In

Aruba you will find most attention for this tradition in the hotels and bars around Palm Beach.


### Day of the National Anthem and Flag

Probably the most popular national holiday on Aruba is the day of the national anthem and flag, Dia di Himno y Bandera .Everywhere on the island there are bake sales, games and special celebrations and many locals are wearing their tee-shirts with the Aruban flag on this day. A strong sense of pride is displayed all over as Arubans celebrate their


Flag and Anthem Day. The Flag of Aruba was officially adopted on March 18th 1976, along with the official anthem “Aruba Dushi Tera” composed by Padu del Caribe , Hubert Booi and Rufo Wever. March 18th was also chosen for the celebration of the national anthem and flag of Aruba because during the round table conference in the Netherlands, on that date in 1948, for the first time a motion was presented to her Majesty Queen Juliana, which called for the self-determination of the Aruban people. □



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## International Media recognizes Aruba resort: Best Vacation Experience at Bucuti & Tara Beach resort



**EAGLE BEACH** – Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort is pleased to share it has been recognized by both U.S. News & World Report and USA Today 10 Best for offering Aruba's top vacation.

**USA Today 10 Best**  
Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort was named among the 10 Best Caribbean Resorts 2019 and Elements restaurant was honored as one of the 10 Best Caribbean Restaurants 2019. For the Readers' Choice Awards,

travel experts selected 20 Caribbean establishments as nominees and winners were determined by a much-followed, reader-driven poll. Bucuti & Tara was the only Aruba property named as a 10 Best winner.

USA TODAY 10 Best prides itself on providing readers with original, unbiased and experiential travel content of top attractions, things to see and do, and restaurants for top destinations around the world. Businesses do not pay to be listed. At its core are well-traveled, well-educated travel experts who are highly knowledgeable and discerning in their tastes. USA TODAY is an award-winning news and information site providing visitors with breaking news, sports, money, life, weather, technology and travel news.

### U.S. News & World Report

U.S. News & World Report once again named Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort the No. 1 Best Hotel on Aruba, honoring it with its coveted Best Hotels Gold Badge. The adults-only enclave was also named among the Top 20 Best Hotels in the Caribbean.

rank. Five million people visit U.S. News Travel each month seeking advice on vacations and hotel accommodations. The editors research thousands of hotels, collect dozens of data points and use an unbiased approach to calculate the rankings.

Ewald Biemans, owner/CEO of Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort expresses his gratitude sharing "it is an honor to be recognized as Aruba's leading hotel among travel experts and our wonderful guests according to USA TODAY and U.S. News & World Report. The biggest attribute of these accolades is our Bucuti associates, the heart of our resort, who consistently strive for a more inspired stay experience for our guests to create everlasting memories."

Award season has been gracious to Bucuti & Tara. In January, the resort was honored with four highly coveted TripAdvisor Travelers' Choice Awards: Top 10 Best Hotels for Romance in the World, No. 1 Hotel for Romance – Caribbean, No. 1 Hotel – Caribbean and No. 1 Hotel for Service – Caribbean. □

The methodology considers a hotel's star rating and both expert and guest sentiment by collecting annual awards from distinguished travel publications and TripAdvisor user scores, the combination of which helps determine each hotel's



## Travel Tips



1. When checking-in, you will always need your valid passport, along with your ticket, e-ticket receipt or e-ticket confirmation. For some countries a Visa is also required.
2. For all US-bound departures, check-in three hours before your scheduled departure time.
3. For all US-bound flights, after check-in, leave building through the exit on the left side of building; follow the signs and head towards local immigrations, main security screening, shopping area and the departure gates. Aruba Airport provides full US Pre-Clearance service.
4. For all Non US departures, check-in may vary between airlines and destinations; always consult your airline for more information. Being at the airport 3 hours before your departure flight is always safe.
5. For all Non US flights, after check-in, leave building through the exit on the right side of building; follow the signs and head towards Local immigrations, main security screening, shopping area and the departure gates.
6. If traveling with a carry-on, there are restrictions on liquids, gels and aerosols you can carry in your carry-on luggage. Always check with your airline on limitations.
7. Always check the weight limit of your baggage; excess weight may result in penalty fees.
8. Always label your bags and suitcases with your name, address and phone number.
9. Always leave all carry-on items unlocked while passing through screening points to not cause delays if these need to be inspected.
10. Avoid wearing big belt buckles, clothing with metal buttons, lots of jewelry etc. when traveling. If you have these on, remove all metal items and place these in a tray for screening. It is advisable to put all metal items in your carry-on luggage until you clear security. This will help speed up the process.
11. Remove shoes at checkpoint and place in tray for x-ray machine screening.
12. All electronic items should be placed in tray outside their case for x-ray screening.
13. Avoid packing foods and beverages in your check-in baggage. When traveling to the US, you have to comply with the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. More information <https://www.usda.gov/>.
14. If traveling with medication, please pack these in your carry-on luggage in their original packaging.
15. If you medical documentation, present this to the security checkpoint screener to inform them. The documentation is not required and will not exempt you from the screening process.
16. Take note of inadmissible items such as sharp objects, sporting goods, guns and firearms, martial arts and self-defense items, tools, explosive materials, flammable items, disabling chemicals and other items when traveling. More information available on [www.airportaruba.com](http://www.airportaruba.com).

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## Canada Softball Team is ready to face Aruba's Team

ORANJESTAD — Its softball time on Aruba and one more time a team of 12 male players from Canada is on the island. The team has arrived and most of them are happy to be on the island for the first time to play against Aruba's team.

They were greeted by Earl Sutherland, who has been bringing the male and female team of Canada. The team is ready to compete against Aruba's team. Canada will be playing 4 games and the first one will be tonight at Flatstone field. The games will be on March 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18.

The players are ready to face their opponents looking to take the maximum title of the tournament. Earl Sutherland, the players and fans are inviting all Canadians to go see the games and support the team. □



## Premiere of Journey of my Shadow: Real Life Story of 2 Addicts



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ORANJESTAD — Foundation Rosea Cultural presents the theatrical play called 'Ruta di Mi sombra' or Journey of my shadow on Sunday, March 31st, 2019 at Cas di Cultura. The event is to raise funds for the foundation Adopt an Addict. This play in Papiamentu is based on the real life of 'Natalie' and 'Ski', 2 well-known persons of Aruba who lived as addicts.

The play shows the hard life on the streets, the physical and mental abuse they went thru, the use of drugs and also the consequences their addiction caused to their mental health. In the play they are called 'Natania and Johnito'. Different circumstances, childhood trauma and an abusive relationship with her mother is what lead 'Natania' to such life. 'Natania' wanted to leave that life behind her and searched for help. With the support of the foundation Adopt and Addict she was sent to the Dominican Republic for rehabilitation. Sadly, after a long and hard battle 'Natania' passed away due to cancer.

The purpose of the play is to serve as a wake-up call for the entire community with regards to these issues. Nowadays the number of cases of drug addicts has reached a new trend in which the age of the addicts is decreasing. More

and more young people are becoming addicts. This is something that needs to be addressed to with priority.

The play is written by three authors; Jarmine Acosta, Marcia Dirks and Madeline Kelly in collaboration with key information received from Mrs. Audrey Croes - Lacle of the Adopt an Addict foundation. The play is directed by Madelene Kelly and Jarmine Acosta. Main actors are Judith Werleman, Dany Marquez, Marcia Dirks and a cast of young actors.

In 2018 a short version of this play was presented at the Festival of Mascaruba and it was a complete success. This year the play will be presented only on Sunday, March 31st, 2019 at Cas di Cultura starting at 7:30 PM. Due to intensity of certain scenes this play is not suitable for children younger than 16 years.

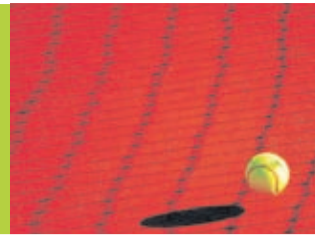
Tickets are available at Maggy's Oranjestad, Sta. Cruz and San Nicolas, De Wit & Van Dorp stores, Plaza Bookshop, SuperFood, Coffeebreak, El Gallo Rojo, all board members of Adopt an Addict and members of Fundacion Rosea Cultural. For more information please contact Mrs. Marcia Dirks at +297 562-9747, Audrey Croes-Lacle or Judith Werleman at +297 566-5247. □

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The Government of Aruba officially announces that the import, production and selling of plastic, oxybenzone and styrofoam are forbidden per January 1st, 2019. Sanctions will apply from January 1st, 2020.



# SPORTS



## MLB players, owners to start labor talks two years early

BY RONALD BLUM  
AP Baseball Writer

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Major League Baseball and its players agreed to an unprecedented early start to contract bargaining, a move sparked by union anger that raised the possibility of a return to work stoppages that marred the sport in the late 20th century.

MLB and the union announced modest rule changes Thursday, mostly starting in 2020 such as expanded rosters and a three-batter minimum for pitchers, and the commissioner's office agreed to drop its push for pitch clocks until 2022 at the earliest.

Players have been furious at slow free-agent markets during the first two off-seasons of the collective bargaining agreement set to expire Dec. 1, 2021. The agreement increased the level of the luxury tax and prompted more teams to jettison veterans in favor of rebuilding with youth. None of the previous 11 collective bargaining agreements dating to 1966 was overhauled in mid-agreement, except for limited areas defined by the sides when the deal was signed.

"It remains to be seen what the union's going to ask for, what we're going to ask for and whether we reach an agreement," deputy commissioner Dan Halem said. "It's a positive sign we were able to reach an agreement with the union on rule changes and hopefully we can build on that."



Keegan Bradley misses a putt on the ninth green during the first round of The Players Championship golf tournament Thursday, March 14, 2019, in Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.

# Tommy Fleetwood, Keegan Bradley tied for lead at Players



Tommy Fleetwood watches his shot on the ninth hole during the first round of The Players Championship golf tournament Thursday, March 14, 2019, in Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla.

Associated Press

**By DOUG FERGUSON**  
**AP Golf Writer**  
**PONTE VEDRA BEACH, Fla.**  
**(AP)** — March or May, there is no shortage of excitement at The Players Championship. Tiger Woods made only one par on the back nine Thursday, revving up the crowd with five birdies, only to slow his charge with three mistakes. Emiliano Grillo hit the pin on the island-green 17th and the ball nearly bounced into the water. One group later, Ryan Moore heard the "clink" of ball hitting pin on the fly and heard only cheers for the ninth hole-in-one on the 17th at TPC Sawgrass. Harris English had an albatross 2. Kiradech Aphibarnrat had an 84. There were 23 eagles. Fifty players had a double bogey or worse.

When the day ended, Keegan Bradley and Tommy Fleetwood went different routes to reach the same score and share the lead at 7-under 65. Bradley got off to a fast start and had three putts for eagle, making one of them. Fleetwood had a big finish with three straight birdie putts of 15 feet or longer. "If you like golf, you should like this golf course, really," Fleetwood said. "It's just about as fair as you're going to get a test. If you hit it well like I did today, you're going to have chances and you can shoot a score, and people are shooting scores. But you can also get it the other way, as soon as you start struggling and start going the other way, it can easily go against you. It's an amazing course for that." Woods hit a shot off a

spectator's ankle on the first hole, clipped a tree off the tee on the second hole, managed to get through the front nine, and then thought he might be able to take advantage late in the afternoon as the wind began to die. He did, and then he didn't. A birdie was followed by a ball in the water on the par-5 11th for a bogey. Two birdies were followed by a shot in the rough-covered mounds. Two more birdies were followed by a missed par putt from 4 feet. It added to a 70, the 17th time in 18 starts at The Players he failed to break 70. The exception was 2013, when he last won. "I felt like I could have got something in the 60s today and got off to not actually the best of starts today," Woods said. "I hit some bad shots early, rectified that, made a

few adjustments, and then went about my business. And then the back nine, there's nine holes on the back nine, made one par. So that was interesting." The move from May after 11 years to its traditional March spot on the calendar brought green, softer conditions and more wind than usual, though it was out of the typical May direction. With the rye overseed making the moderate rough more predictable, players took aim. Fleetwood had only one birdie on the slightly easier back nine, and finished with birdie putts from 15 feet, 30 feet and 18 feet. "You get on a run like 7, 8, 9, and it feels great after that," Fleetwood said. "Just one of them would feel like a great round, so three of them ... I'll take it." Byeong Hun An and Brian

Harman were at 66, while Rory McIlroy also played bogey-free for a 67. He was in a group with Moore, who used a 54-degree wedge for his ace on the 17th. "The group right before me, we were walking up 16 ... I think it was Grillo hit the pin about 2 inches above the cup and almost went back in the water," Moore said. "I heard mine clink and I was just waiting to go see where the ball went. And then no ball showed up." Also at 67 was Vaughn Taylor, who must love the move back to March. Taylor is among 23 players who have competed on the Stadium Players Course in both months. He tied for eighth the last time it was in March in 2006. In the eight times he played in May, he never made the cut. Bradley, who a week ago shared the 36-hole lead with Fleetwood at Bay Hill, has only one top 10 in his eight trips to the TPC Sawgrass. "Early in my career, I felt so uncomfortable on this course. I really didn't play well here," Bradley said. "It didn't really enjoy ... it just wasn't a good fit for me. And then this year, I really enjoy the different conditions that we're playing in. I like the rough better, and I think it's a great time of year to play here." McIlroy was among those who approved of the calendar change. This was only the third time in 10 starts at The Players he broke 70 in the first round. "I think the course over the last 10 years ... it hasn't lent itself to aggressive play," McIlroy said. "It's sort of position and irons of the tee and really trying to plot your way around the golf course. I hit drivers on holes today that I would never have hit driver the last few years. "I don't know if the course is easier or not," he said. "We'll see what the stroke average is at the end of the day. But because I think it's playing longer, it'll play longer for most of the guys, and I think it should all even out. But I definitely like the golf course the way it is in March." □

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## Blackhawks deny Maple Leafs' comeback, hold on for 5-4 win

**TORONTO (AP)** — Brendan Perlini had a goal and two assists, and the Chicago Blackhawks held off a furious Toronto comeback to beat the Maple Leafs 5-4 on Wednesday night.

Brandon Saad had a goal and an assist, and Duncan Keith, Dominik Kahun and Alex DeBrincat also scored as Chicago jumped out to a 5-0 lead before holding on for the win. Dylan Strome added two assists for the Blackhawks, who have won four straight and crept within four points of the Arizona Coyotes for the second wild card in the Western Conference.

Corey Crawford stopped 17 of 18 shots through two periods before leaving the game due to illness. Colin Delia had 26 saves — all in the third.

Auston Matthews, Morgan Rielly and Andreas Johnson each had a goal and an assist for Toronto, and John Tavares also scored.

William Nylander and Mitch Marner each had two assists. Frederik Andersen gave up four goals on 14 shots in the first before he was replaced by Garret Sparks, who finished with 24 saves.

**DEVILS 6, OILERS 3**

**EDMONTON, Alberta (AP)** — Kenny Agostino, Damon Severson and Kevin Rooney each had a goal and an assist as New Jersey snapped a season-high seven-game losing streak. Travis Zajac, John Quenneville and Blake Coleman also scored for the Devils, and Cory Schneider stopped 36 shots.

Sam Gagner, Alex Chiosson and Matt Benning had goals for the Oilers, who have lost two of their last three games. Mikko Koskinen gave up four goals on 18 shots before he was replaced midway through the third. Anthony Stolarz came on and finished with 15 saves on 17 shots.

Zajac showed some deft hands in front as he tied the score 2-2 with 19 seconds left in the first period.

The Devils then scored the first three goals of the second to take control of the game.

**CANUCKS 4, RANGERS 1**

**VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP)** — Tyler Motte scored two goals 11 seconds apart midway through the second period, leading Vancouver past the New York Rangers.

Brock Boeser and Jake Virtanen also scored for the Canucks, and Jacob Markstrom stopped 21 shots.

Pavel Buchnevich had a power-play goal for the Rangers. Henrik Lundqvist finished with 24 saves as he was denied his 450th win.

New York became the first team this season to lose two players to misconducts in a game after forwards Chris Kreider and Brendan Lemieux were both ejected in the second period. □



Chicago Blackhawks goaltender Corey Crawford (50) stretches to make a save against the Toronto Maple Leafs right wing William Nylander during the first period of an NHL hockey game Wednesday, March 13, 2019, in Toronto.

Associated Press





Golden State Warriors' DeMarcus Cousins (0) shoots as Houston Rockets' Clint Capela (15) defends during the second half of an NBA basketball game, Wednesday, March 13, 2019, in Houston. Associated Press

# Warriors, minus Durant, stop Rockets' 9-game win streak

**By The Associated Press**  
**HOUSTON (AP)** — Klay Thompson scored 30 points, DeMarcus Cousins had a season-high 27 and the Golden State Warriors snapped Houston's nine-game winning streak Wednesday night with a 106-104 victory over the Rockets.  
 Playing without injured star Kevin Durant, the Warriors bounced back from Sunday's loss to Phoenix and avoided being swept by Houston after the Rockets won the first three meetings this season.  
 Golden State, which had lost six of 10 overall, is 4 1/2 games ahead of Houston atop the Western Confer-

ence standings. The Rockets are tied with Oklahoma City for third place behind Denver.  
 After trailing by 14 in the fourth quarter, a three-point play by Chris Paul got Houston within one with 10.8 seconds left. Stephen Curry made two free throws with eight seconds remaining to make it 106-103, and James Harden hit one of two from the line at the other end with 6.4 seconds to go. The miss on the second one bounced high off the rim and was rebounded by Andre Iguodala, securing Golden State's victory.  
 Harden had 29 points and 10 assists but shot just 2 of 12 on 3-pointers. Paul fin-

ished with 24 points. Curry added 24 points for Golden State. Durant missed the game with a sprained right ankle.  
**THUNDER 108, NETS 96**  
**OKLAHOMA CITY (AP)** — Russell Westbrook scored 31 points in his 26th triple-double of the season as Oklahoma City beat Brooklyn.  
 Westbrook added 12 rebounds and 11 assists for the 130th triple-double of his career.  
 Paul George scored 25 points and Jerami Grant added 15 for the Thunder, looking to secure home-court advantage in the first round of the playoffs.  
 Spencer Dinwiddie had 25 points for the Nets, who won their previous four games.

**HEAT 108, PISTONS 74**  
**MIAMI (AP)** — Justise Winslow scored 16 points and Miami opened the second half with a 21-0 run on the way to an easy win over Detroit.

It was the biggest spurt and largest victory margin this season for the Heat, who are trying to hang on in the Eastern Conference playoff race.  
 Dion Waiters scored 14 points and Dwyane Wade had 11.  
 Blake Griffin scored 13 points for the Pistons, who have dropped consecutive games for the first time since late January.  
 Miami (32-35) is still No. 8 in the East, two games ahead of No. 9 Orlando and two games back of No. 7 Detroit.

Andre Drummond fouled out with 6:30 left and finished with five points and nine rebounds — snapping his run of 19 consecutive double-doubles, which left him tied with Bob Lanier for the Pistons record.

**WIZARDS 100, MAGIC 90**  
**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Bradley Beal scored 23 points, Thomas Bryant had 21 points and 10 rebounds, and Washington made up a little ground in the Eastern Conference playoff race with a win over Orlando. □

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# Garcia double-step to face Spence in undefeated title match

By STEPHEN HAWKINS

**ARLINGTON, Texas (AP)** — Errol Spence Jr. didn't like four-division champion Mikey Garcia describing him as just another opponent.

"Stop talking about your other opponents like I'm one of them," shot back Spence, the IBF welter-weight champion.

When Spence and Garcia step into the ring Saturday night — at midfield in the massive billion-dollar home stadium of the favorite NFL team for both fighters — it will be a matchup of undefeated champions, and two of the best pound-for-pound boxers.

Garcia, the reigning WBC lightweight champion who is 39-0 with 30 knockouts, is moving up two weight classes to take on Spence, at 24-0 with 21 knockouts and fighting at home in North Texas for the second time in nine months.

"He's going to find out why I chose to fight him and why I picked this fight," Garcia said. "Like all of my other opponents, they don't see anything flashy, they don't see anything special, but when they get inside the ring, then they realize that I am special in a different



Boxers Errol Spence Jr., left, and Mikey Garcia, right, adorn Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones with their championship belts during a press conference Tuesday, Feb. 19, 2019 in Arlington, Texas. Associated Press

way."

Spence is defending his title in the 147-pound division for the third time. He stopped previously undefeated challenger Carlos Ocampo with a first-round knockout at the Dallas Cowboys' practice facility in Frisco last June, not far from his home in Desoto.

This title defense is a pay-per-view match from AT&T Stadium, where

the Cowboys play their home games and where the ring will be centered under the looming 72-foot tall video boards that stretch between the 20-yard lines. "This is a dream come true fighting in my hometown," Spence said. "Seeing Mikey Garcia's face through this whole training camp just made me more focused and more hungry to put on a great performance."

Garcia grew up around Oxnard, California, where the Cowboys hold part of their preseason training camp each year.

Not only is Spence used to the heavier division, the 29-year-old southpaw is about three inches taller and has a longer reach. But he doesn't think the size difference is what gives him the advantage.

"Skill for skill, talent for talent,

I'm more dominant than him in everything, in every aspect," Spence said. "The size won't matter. I'll beat him in anything he wants to do. If he wants to box, I'll beat him in that. If he wants to fight, I'll beat him in that too. Whatever gameplan they've got going, it won't work."

Of course, Garcia feels the same way going into the bout when he has a chance for a major title in a fifth division. That would put him in a select group with Thomas Hearn, Sugar Ray Leonard, Oscar De La Hoya, Manny Pacquiao and Floyd Mayweather Jr.

"This fight, getting the victory, will forever leave my name in the history books of boxing. I'm here to create a legacy, I'm here to make history and this fight does that," Garcia said. "No other fighter's doing what I'm doing, no other fighter is daring to do what I'm doing. ... I'm about big challenges, big obstacles, and just to show everybody that I'm the best."

While acknowledging that "on paper" Garcia is his toughest opponent to date, Spence said he won't know for sure until they get into the ring. □

# Court upholds \$1.5M award to analyst in MLB Network firing

By DAVID PORTER

**NEWARK, N.J. (AP)** — A New Jersey appeals court on Thursday upheld a \$1.5 million jury award to former Philadelphia Phillies pitcher Mitch Williams stemming from his firing by the MLB Network in 2014 over his alleged conduct at a youth baseball tournament. The former closer, nicknamed "Wild Thing" for his on-field antics with the Phillies and five other major league teams, sued after the network cited a morals clause in his contract to terminate him.

Williams, who pitched for the Phillies in the 1993 World Series, was hired as an analyst to a five-year contract with MLB Network in 2011. Two articles on the sports website Deadspin described his alleged behav-

ior at a May 2014 tournament in Maryland involving a team of 10-year-olds that included Williams' son.

Williams swore at umpires and ordered one of his pitchers to throw at an opposing batter, the articles claimed. Williams denied the allegations.

Two umpires' accounts later differed on whether Williams used profanity, and none could be heard on audio and video recorded at the game, according to Thursday's ruling. Some witnesses who were at the game testified they didn't hear Williams tell his pitcher to throw at the opposing player.

After the articles were published, the network put Williams on leave and asked him to sign an agreement saying he would refrain

from attending or coaching youth games and not post on social media without the network's approval. Williams declined, and he was terminated in June 2014.

After a jury in Camden County decided in his favor in 2017, the network appealed, arguing the trial judge made unfair evidence rulings and erred by not dismissing the case before it went to trial.

The appeals court disagreed, writing Thursday that "the trial court fairly dealt with the abundant legal and evidentiary issues presented by both sides — before, during, and after the trial.

"We are satisfied the trial judge and the jury resolved the parties' disputes in this case fairly and soundly,



In this Oct. 1, 2008, file photo, former Philadelphia Phillies pitcher Mitch Williams throws out the ceremonial first pitch before the start of Game 1 of the National League division baseball series between the Phillies and the Milwaukee Brewers in Philadelphia. Associated Press

and did so based on ample relevant evidence and general legal principles," the panel added.

An MLB Network spokesman said Thursday the network is reviewing the ruling and assessing its options. □

# Shiffrin wins super-G title but 'never thought' she could

**SOLDEU, Andorra (AP)** — Mikaela Shiffrin added yet another trophy to her record-breaking season at the World Cup Finals on Thursday.

Unlike most of her other recent victories and titles, though, this one was unexpected.

Shiffrin won the World Cup super-G season title for her 10th career crystal globe — but first in a speed discipline.

"It's special because I really never thought I could be in this position this season already in super-G," said Shiffrin, who had not won a race in the discipline before this campaign.

"The way that everybody came together and made this work was just amazing," Shiffrin said, paying tribute to her coaches. "We are all so proud and everybody feels some ownership of this."

Shiffrin finished fourth in the season-ending race, which was won by Viktoria Rebensburg of Germany. She has also won three overall titles and six slalom titles, and is a strong favorite to add the giant slalom season prize on Sunday.

Thursday's result moved Shiffrin past the 2,000-point mark in the overall standings, making her only the second skier to achieve the feat in the 53-year history of the World Cup after Tina Maze did it in 2013.

With two races left this weekend, Shiffrin has 2,004 points and cannot break the Slovenian standout's record of 2,414 — but that has never been a goal of Shiffrin's, who skipped various events this season.

In fact, remarks by Maze back in 2013 have played a role in Shiffrin's decision not to enter all races.

Shiffrin recalled how Maze came up to her after she had edged the Slovenian to the slalom title in the last race of the 2012-13 season, in which Maze had competed in each and every

World Cup event. "She congratulated me and she basically said, 'Don't do everything. It's so exhausting. I've completely lost my passion.' She looked at me dead straight in the eyes and we'd had spoken a little bit before that, but up until that point, we were direct competitors competing for the slalom globe," Shiffrin said.

"It has stuck with me, almost haunted me, to the point where I'm like, yeah, I want to be able to race in everything. I want to be able to win in everything. But not to the point where I'm going to lose my passion. The schedule is so grueling and racing day in and day out and especially for somebody who's maybe more of an introverted personality. I don't necessarily draw strength racing or from being in that spotlight during races. That can be really tough. I totally saw it in her eyes."

Shiffrin took it as warning. To the surprise of skiing greats like Lindsey Vonn and Bode Miller, she skipped the downhill and combined events at the world championships after winning gold in super-G.

Even entering the super-G race at this year's World Cup Finals was not obvious to her, despite leading the standings after triumphing in all three previous World Cup super-Gs she competed in this campaign.

A week ago, Shiffrin posted a photo on Instagram of her carrying her super-G skis, and saying, "Yes, these are my super-G skis, which can only mean one thing... take a guess??"

Shiffrin's title chase got a boost because several races she had not entered were canceled, most notably last week in Sochi, where two super-Gs were called off because of bad weather.

Shiffrin, who locked up the overall and the slalom titles weeks ago, is the first wom-



United States' Mikaela Shiffrin holds the women's World Cup super G discipline trophy, at the alpine ski World Cup finals, in Soldeu, Andorra, Thursday, March 14, 2019.

Associated Press

an since Maze six years ago to win discipline titles in a technical and a speed event in the same season. "I've dreamed about someday, maybe, being able to win a globe in super-G but I really wasn't expecting it this season," said Shiffrin, who turned 24 on Wednesday. Shiffrin started the race with a 36-point lead over Tina Weirather of Liechtenstein, who won the super-G title the last two seasons. Weirather posted the fastest split times but skied out halfway down her run. Rebensburg beat Tamara Tippler of Austria by 0.15 seconds to win the race, with Federica Brignone of Italy 0.34 behind in third.

Shiffrin shared fourth with Nicole Schmidhofer of Austria, 0.44 behind. Schmidhofer finished runner-up in the standings, trailing the American by 47 points. The women used the same course as the one for the men's race though some gates were set differently. Dominik Paris secured the men's title by winning the season-ending race. Both Shiffrin and Paris won super-G titles at the world championships five weeks ago, but had not won the season-long World Cup prize in the discipline before. Paris won his second race in as many days after also triumphing in Wednesday's downhill for his 16th ca-

reer victory and first crystal globe.

He extended his lead in the final standings to 84 points over Vincent Kriechmayr of Austria, ending a seven-year reign by Norway, which swept all super-G titles since 2012.

"It's a dream come true. It's a lot of hard work and I pushed always," Paris said. "I was two, three times very close to take this but today it was working. I am so happy."

Paris beat Mauro Caviezel of Switzerland by 0.15 seconds to win the race. Kriechmayr was third, 0.44 behind. The World Cup Finals continue with the team event on Friday. □

# Raonic ends lucky loser's run at Indian Wells

By BETH HARRIS  
AP Sports Writer

INDIAN WELLS, Calif. (AP)

— Milos Raonic made sure Miomir Kecmanovic's good luck finally ran out at the BNP Paribas Open.

Raonic beat the 19-year-old Serb 6-3, 6-4 on Thursday to reach the semifinals and improve to 19-4 at Indian Wells since 2014.

Raonic fired 13 aces against no double faults in putting away Kecmanovic in 72 minutes on a sunny, windy and cool day in the Southern California desert.

"Even when I was hitting the spots, I wasn't hitting them that well," Raonic said of his serving. "I think that can get better."

Kecmanovic was the first lucky loser to reach the quarterfinals at the tournament since it became a Masters 1000 event in 1990. Ranked 130th in the world, the Serb lost in qualifying, but his fortune soon turned. Three seeded players withdrew before the tourna-

ment began, clearing the way for Kecmanovic to become a lucky loser and receive a first-round bye.

The teenager certainly made the most of it. Kecmanovic got by three players, including 30th-seeded Laslo Djere, in straight sets to set up his second meeting with Raonic.

That's where Kecmanovic's luck ended.

Raonic won 88 percent of his first-serve points and saved all three break chances against him.

"I knew he had nothing to lose, and I had to be really disciplined with myself," Raonic said.

In January, Raonic beat Kecmanovic in straight sets on his way to the title at Brisbane in January.

The string of upsets continued on the women's side.

Belinda Bencic beat fifth-seeded Karolina Pliskova 6-3, 4-6, 6-3 to reach the semis, ensuring her return to the top 20 in the rankings.

"I wouldn't believe I win to-



Milos Raonic, of Canada, celebrates winning a point against Miomir Kecmanovic, of Serbia, at the BNP Paribas Open tennis tournament Thursday, March 14, 2019, in Indian Wells, Calif.

Associated Press

day again," Bencic said. "I'm not going to the court with any expectation. I'm just trying to play. This is the mentality I have, and this is the mentality I'm going to

keep having." Bencic was pushed to three sets for the first time in four matches at the tournament. She was coming off a straight-set upset of

defending champion and top-ranked Naomi Osaka in the fourth round.

Pliskova raced to 4-1 lead before wrapping up the second set. In the third, she overcame a break point to hold at 2-all but only won one more game the rest of the way. "Physically, it was tough somehow, and the wind didn't help much," Pliskova said. "So my serve was bad, my shots were bad."

Bencic next plays the winner of Thursday's match between No. 8 Angelique Kerber and Venus Williams. Bencic improved to 18-3 this year. She won her third career title at Dubai last month and her first since 2015. The 22-year-old Swiss player missed five months in 2017 after wrist surgery.

"When you're confident, you can really just trust your instincts and you don't have to think about it at all," Bencic said. "I'm definitely playing how I feel it, and it's going well so I'm not planning on changing that." □

## LABOR TALKS

Continued from Page 17

Ordinarily, the sides would have started negotiations in March 2021. The union proposed major economic changes this offseason that management refused to consider, such as expanding the designated hitter to the National League, addressing service-time rules that affect eligibility to free agency and salary arbitration. Also, adding provisions to the amateur draft that would make it harder to accumulate high draft picks over several seasons. As part of the deal on rule changes designed to speed the pace of play, management agreed to broader talks.

"I think the common ground that we were able to find here has cracked open a door to a broader conversion," union head Tony Clark said. "And that broader conversion we believe is necessary and in the best interest of both parties. How things manifest themselves moving forward remains to be seen."

Baseball had eight work stoppages from 1972-

95 but has reached four straight deals without interrupting play. While there is no deadline, as a practical matter the sides would have to agree to major economic changes before free-agent negotiations start, on the sixth day following the World Series.

"Teams have the right to know what the rules are before they start making decisions regarding what their teams are going to look like," Halem said.

Many players have labeled what rebuilding teams have done as "tanking." Attendance had dropped in three straight seasons, and the average crowd last year fell below 30,000 for the first time since 2003.

With most teams' openers less two weeks away, top free agents Craig Kimbrel and Dallas Keuchel remain unsigned.

"Today's were steps in the right direction, but we want every team to want to win. The fact of the matter there's still really good guys out there are free agents and they can help," Detroit pitcher Matthew Boyd said after a union meet-

ing at Lakeland, Florida. "Fans want to show up and pay money to watch two teams that are good and have the best players in the game."

The union meeting was held on a back field rather than the clubhouse after Tigers outfielder Nicholas Castellanos believed he spotted a team employee in a locker room kitchen, a person familiar with the gathering said. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because no announcement was authorized.

As part of the agreement: For 2019:

—Trade waivers will be eliminated, meaning no player can be traded after July 31 through the end of the regular season. Players who clear outright waivers can still be claimed and will be eligible for the postseason if they are in the organization before Sept. 1. The sides are discussing when trades can resume, with after the League Championship Series or after World Series among the possibilities. With the change, additional free agents could be subject to draft-pick com-



In this Feb. 1, 2018, file photo, Major League Baseball commissioner Rob Manfred speaks during a news conference in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

pensation because a team can make a qualifying offer only to a free agent who had been on the club since opening day.

—Mound visits without pitching changes will be cut from six to five.

—MLB has the right to cut half-inning breaks to 2 minutes this year, down from 2:05 for most games and 2:25 for nationally televised games.

—Fan voting for the All-Star Game will be divided into two rounds, with the top three vote-getters advancing for all positions except the outfield, for which six

will move on. The top three voter-getters at each position will receive bonuses of \$2,500 to \$15,000, which will not count against a team's luxury-tax payroll. Home Run Derby prize money will be increased to \$2.5 million, including \$1 million for the winner, up from the \$725,000 total previously agreed to for 2019, of which \$150,000 had been designated for the winner. The amount of money for the winning team, which had been \$640,000, will be increased so that each player on that team gets about \$5,000 more. □

# Facebook says outages due to 'server configuration change'

By MAE ANDERSON

AP Technology Writer

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Facebook went down for almost a full day across parts of North America and Europe, but it's still not saying exactly what happened.

All the social network said Thursday was that the outages, which affected users and advertisers worldwide, resulted from a "server configuration change." It offered no further details.

Facebook and its apps — Instagram, Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp — started experiencing problems midday Wednesday on the U.S. East Coast. Facebook was still having sporadic issues Thursday morning.

Facebook did not say how many users were affected or why the outage took so long to fix. In a tweet about 24 hours after the problems began, Facebook apologized and thanked people for their patience. It didn't elaborate on the server change.

The outage is yet another publicity problem for a company already dealing with privacy issues and regulatory probes.

The disruption isn't likely to hurt advertisers much, since



they usually pay for ads per click or impression. But they lose potential customers who might have seen their ads when the site and apps were down. Longer term, Facebook's reputation with advertisers and investors could be damaged, said Wedbush Securities managing director Dan Ives.

It didn't help that it took Facebook so long to explain what was going on, he said. Facebook said on Wednesday that the problem was not related to a "distributed denial of service" or DDoS attack, a

type of attack that hackers use to interrupt service to a site, but didn't provide any other details until Thursday.

"In these situations a lack of transparency is not a good look," Ives said. "The longer something like this lasts, the more questions there are."

The disruption seemed spotty, with some apps and parts of the apps working for some but not others. While some less active users may not have noticed that Facebook services were down, other frequent users and advertisers keenly felt its absence.

The Drummers Garden Center & Floral, a plant store in Mankato, Minnesota, was unable to hold a live video Q&A on Facebook that it had planned for weeks. Customers and employees were both confused.

"I hope our customers aren't upset that we couldn't communicate with them. We're not used to it being down," said Jackie Karsten, the marketing coordinator for the store. She said two people called the store to ask if they were doing something wrong on

their end. The Q&A has been rescheduled for Monday — which the store announced in a post to its Facebook page.

Many users had a ready outlet for their frustrations: Twitter. Social media power user U.S. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, for example, lamented the lack of Instagram Wednesday evening on Twitter. "Is Instagram still down? Bc after 2 months almost furnitureless in DC I am trying to take you all on the riveting adventure of getting: a chair," she tweeted with a smiley face emoji.

Users have learned to take social media breakdowns in stride, said Tim Bjarin, president of consultancy Creative Strategies.

"People have dealt with these types of outages for some time now," he said. "While they are annoying, it has happened enough that a lot of people are now conditioned to roll with the punches."

Steve Jones, a professor of communications at the University of Illinois at Chicago, said the fallout might have been far different if the outage took place ahead of or during a major news event, like an election. □



In this Feb. 27, 2017, file photo Facebook's Chief of Product officer, Chris Cox, speaks at the first day of the social media week at the Landmark centre in Lagos, Nigeria.

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE and RACHEL LERMAN AP Technology Writers

**SAN FRANCISCO (AP)** — Facebook is losing its product chief Chris Cox, a top-ranking executive who spent more than a decade at the company, just a week after CEO Mark Zuckerberg announced a major

new direction for the social network.

The departure, announced Thursday, follows Zuckerberg's announcement that Facebook will shift its emphasis to private messaging over public sharing. The change reflects Facebook's changing audience and continued

## Facebook loses longtime product chief as it revamps strategy

problems with serving as a conduit for misinformation and vitriol. Cox, 36, worked closely with Zuckerberg through the company's ups and downs, having joined up about 20 months after Facebook was hatched in 2004 in Zuckerberg's Harvard dorm room.

Cox "is a great guy who is someone who has always tried to do good," said David Kirkpatrick, an author who became well acquainted with Cox and Zuckerberg while writing a book about Facebook. "My guess is there was some sort of disagreement. He would not be leaving at this challenging time if there wasn't something else going on." Neither Cox nor Zuckerberg specified what led to their

split.

"Most all my personal highs and lows of the last decade have been tied up in the journey of this company, with Mark, and with so many of you," Cox wrote in a post. "This place will forever be a part of me."

Zuckerberg said Cox first mentioned he might leave a few years ago, but decided to stay on after 2016 as evidence emerged that Russians had manipulated Facebook's services to provoke discord in the U.S. and influence the election won by President Donald Trump. "I will always appreciate his deep empathy for the people using our services and the uplifting spirit he brings to everything he does," Zuckerberg said of Cox in

his parting note.

Like many other longtime Facebook executives, Cox is unlikely to ever have to work again if he doesn't want to. He pocketed \$310 million in gains from exercising Facebook stock options from 2014 through 2017 alone, according to the company's filings with securities regulators.

Zuckerberg also announced another departure — Chris Daniels, who had been overseeing Facebook's encrypted messaging service WhatsApp. Daniels is leaving less than a year after WhatsApp founder Jan Koum resigned in an apparent dispute with Zuckerberg over the future direction of the widely used messaging service. □



# Why college students take on loans they can't repay

By TEDDY NYKIEL  
Associated Press

Students take on college debt with the best of intentions. They've been told that a college degree is a ticket to success. That they should pursue their dreams. That student debt is good debt.

But how do smart students wind up with debt they can't repay? Here are three reasons, plus ways to avoid these financial traps.

## THEY'RE TOLD IT'S 'GOOD DEBT'

In high school, students hear that they should earn a college degree to have a well-paying, successful career.

"We as a society kind of have this compulsory higher education," says Daniel T. Kirsch, author of "Sold My Soul for a Student Loan." "We're encouraging everyone to take out debt and calling it 'good debt'."

But student debt isn't good when your degree doesn't lead to a job that earns enough to repay it.

This is the case for 36-year-old Jennifer Atkins of Jacksonville, Florida. A first-generation college student, she believed a university diploma would help her get ahead.

"I had the mentality back then that I was doing what I was supposed to do in life," says Atkins, who earned three degrees, including a master of nonprofit management in 2014. Now, Atkins has two kids, over \$100,000 in student loan debt and is unemployed. She quit her job in 2017 due to complications with her second pregnancy and hasn't found a job lucrative enough to justify paying for child care.

**AVOID THIS TRAP:** Limit borrowing so that future monthly payments don't

consume over 10 percent of take-home pay. By that standard, someone expecting to earn \$50,000 a year could afford a monthly payment of about \$279, according to NerdWallet's student loan affordability calculator. At the current undergraduate federal student loan interest rate of 5.05%, that payment would support college debt of about \$26,000.

## THE LOANS DON'T FEEL REAL

Some students are willing to take on large amounts of college debt because they don't connect with the reality that they'll eventually have to repay it with interest. This aligns with what behavioral economists call "present bias," the idea that people often make choices that benefit them in the short term and overlook future consequences. Atkins remembers accepting student loans in small



In this May 17, 2018, file photo, new graduates line up before the start of the Bergen Community College commencement at MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, N.J.

Associated Press

increments throughout 10 years of higher education — \$3,000 here, \$5,000 there. She worked throughout school, but the loans were crucial to making ends meet.

"None of it was real to me back then," Atkins says. "I had no problem clicking

'accept' on those student loans."

In hindsight, Atkins says she wishes she had had a mandatory career counseling session to walk her through the numbers and understand her debt in the context of her future earnings and expenses. □

# Stock edge higher in midday trading after a wobbly start

By DAMIAN J. TROISE  
Associated Press

**NEW YORK (AP)** — U.S. stocks were edging higher in midday trading on Wall Street Thursday, putting the market on track to extend the week's gains.

Communications stocks led the decliners as Facebook fell 2 percent amid reports of a criminal investigation into its data-sharing practices.

The losses were offset partly by gains in banks and technology stocks. JPMorgan Chase and Apple rose.

The market had been rallying throughout the week and reclaiming some of the momentum it had in January and February. Investors have been weighing a mixed bag of economic data while keeping a close watch on global trade issues. The markets have mostly brushed off the chaos surrounding Britain's exit the European Union, its key trading bloc.

Boeing started to level off after falling throughout the week as nations and airlines ground its newest 737s over safety concerns. A

second deadly crash over the weekend involving its 737 Max 8 and safety concerns stunted the company's stock gains.

Investors are also still waiting for more details on trade negotiations between the U.S. and China. Media reports had stoked hope that a summit would take place this month, but no concrete announcement has been made.

**KEEPING SCORE:** The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 21 points, or 0.1 percent to 25,723 as of 12:40 p.m. The S&P 500 index and the Nasdaq composite rose slightly. All three started the day lower and turned higher around noon. **ANALYST'S TAKE:** Investors are still waiting for some more news on U.S.-China trade negotiations before they feel comfortable pushing the market much higher, said Scott Wren, senior global equity strategist for Wells Fargo Investment Institute.

Despite some softness over the last few weeks, the U.S. stock market is still considered a safe haven relative

to the rest of the world, he said.

"We're still the lead sled dogs here, we're pulling the global economy along," he said.

**BAGGY FIT:** Tailored Brands, which owns Men's Warehouse, plunged 23.1 percent after giving investors a surprisingly weak first-quarter profit forecast. The company has been trying to increase sales at both Men's

Warehouse and its Jos. A. Bank stores, but is facing a tougher retail market.

**DOLLAR DIP:** Dollar General fell 8.4 percent after the company's fourth-quarter profit fell short of Wall Street forecasts. The discount-store operator also gave investors a weak full-year profit forecast.

**OVERSHARING:** Facebook fell 2 percent after the New York Times reported that its

data-sharing practices are now under criminal investigation.

The investigation into how it sells data is the latest in a list of privacy scandals the social media company faces. Its privacy practices have already been scrutinized by The Federal Trade Commission. The company and its CEO have also faced Congressional inquiries. □

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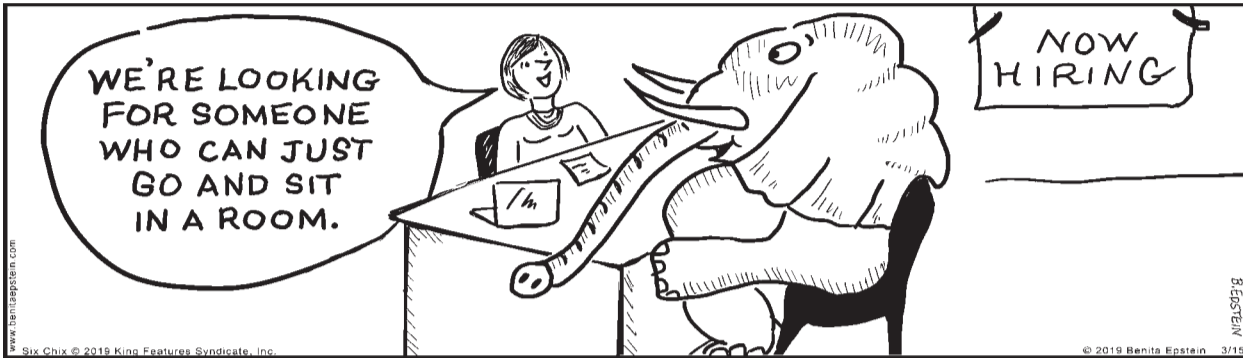
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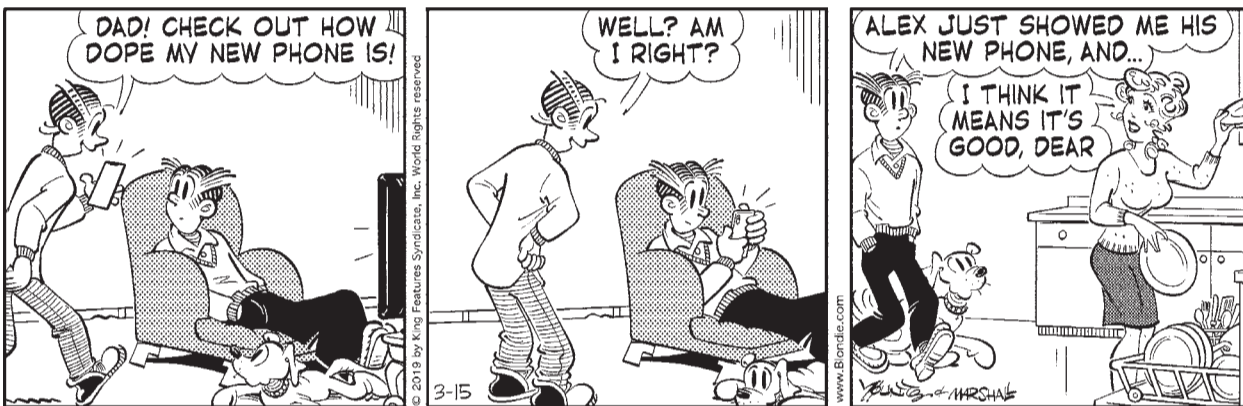
**Mutts**



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**Baby Blues**



**Zits**



**Conceptis Sudoku**

	7				5			
				3			9	4
5	2		9					
4				9	4			3
		1	8					
				2	1			6
9	3			7				
		5					8	

Difficulty Level ★★★★★ 3/15

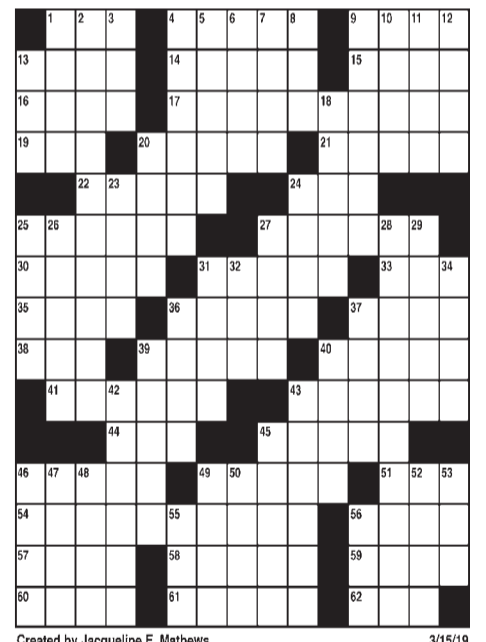
Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

4	8	6	1	3	9	7	5	2
5	3	2	6	4	7	9	8	1
1	7	9	2	8	5	6	4	3
7	4	8	9	2	6	3	1	5
3	9	5	8	1	4	2	7	6
2	6	1	7	5	3	8	9	4
8	2	7	4	6	1	5	3	9
6	1	3	5	9	8	4	2	7
9	5	4	3	7	2	1	6	8

**ACROSS**

- 1 "I \_\_\_ your pardon?"
- 4 Water vapor
- 9 Prefix for enemy or bishop
- 13 Skirt style
- 14 Refrain syllables
- 15 Mah-jongg piece
- 16 Cemetery division
- 17 Deferential; courteous
- 19 Feminine pronoun
- 20 Counts calories
- 21 Despised
- 22 Combine; mix
- 24 One of the Seven Dwarfs
- 25 Winter Olympics sport
- 27 Hoopster's goal
- 30 Nervous
- 31 Illegal payoff
- 33 As likely as \_\_\_; probably
- 35 Orderly
- 36 Assumed name
- 37 Celebrity
- 38 Lion's home
- 39 Taters
- 40 Use profane language
- 41 Not as fresh
- 43 Remove text
- 44 To the \_\_\_; fully
- 45 Sri \_\_\_
- 46 Frequently
- 49 Money for college
- 51 Sunbathe
- 54 Sin
- 56 Exhale with relief
- 57 Socially inept fellow
- 58 Hora or hula
- 59 Part of the foot
- 60 Candy store chain
- 61 Firstborn of two
- 62 Suffix for giant or govern



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews 3/15/19

**Thursday's Puzzle Solved**

PASS	MASKS	ADAM
EVEL	ADIEU	SAGA
LILY	RINGMASTER	
ESE	BOOK	FEEDS
	CHAOS	FIT
SATURN	PARSON	
ALIMB	CRIME	VET
SLOP	PAYEE	MARE
SIN	TUNED	SALVE
ESCAPE	ANNOYS	
LIS	BRIEF	
ANDON	WEEP	FDR
BEAUTICIAN	TIRE	
LEND	TERRA	ICED
EDGY	SEEDS	NEWS

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- 4 Kite maker's need
- 5 Covered with pines
- 6 Vane direction
- 7 European range
- 8 Name with Fannie or Ginnie
- 9 Assault
- 10 Fissure; split
- 11 Helpful hint
- 12 \_\_\_ on to; kept
- 13 Speedometer letters
- 18 Picked
- 20 Declare untrue
- 23 Shopper's paper
- 24 Brylcreem amounts
- 25 Beach surface
- 26 Leg parts
- 27 Unfair slant
- 28 Pleas
- 29 BLT bread
- 31 Make hazy
- 32 Get \_\_\_ of; eliminate
- 34 Hemlock or hazel
- 36 Pinnacle

**DOWN**

- 1 Actor Christian
- 2 Way too pricey
- 3 \_\_\_ Along, Little Dogies"

- 37 Pout
- 39 Street talk
- 40 U.S. coin
- 42 Reforms oneself
- 43 Risk
- 45 Steel-tipped spear
- 46 Possesses
- 47 On the house
- 48 \_\_\_ off; left suddenly
- 49 Objective
- 50 Orange peel
- 52 Grows gray
- 53 Org. for Penguins & Ducks
- 55 Ike's initials
- 56 That girl

# Classifieds

## Halley Time Travel

### Divi Village

Sunday Check in building F  
1 BR WK # 8 & 9 Same room  
rd floor with 21 and 25 weeks  
remain  
on the contract \$7500 Each

### Divi Links Golf

Saturday Check in Eagle 15  
1BR WK 8 & 9 with 27  
weeks remain \$9000 each  
Eagle Resorts & Casino  
1 Br WK 7 Ground floor \$5500

### Divi Village

Building C Elevator  
2 BR WK 13 \$14K  
3rd floor with 29/8 accelerated  
weeks remain  
Divi Links Golf  
Birdie 1  
1 BR WK 11 & 12 \$7.5 K each  
2 sd floor with 25 weeks remain

### Divi Links Golf

Birdie 1  
Studio WK 11 \$7 K  
2 sd floor with 27 weeks remain  
Divi Village  
Building C  
1 BR WK #14 \$7500  
1st floor with 16 weeks remain

### La Cabana Beach and Casino

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weeks  
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Renaissance suites  
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2 BR Ocean Front \$27 K  
3 BR Ocean View \$27 K  
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Building 7 3rd floor  
34 weeks remain \$15 K

### Dutch Village

Studio wk # 9  
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3BEDROM \$26k  
\*WK. 51 OV \$39k  
\*WK 52 OV \$46k  
\* Weeks 7 and 14-all views

### Marriott Aruba Ocean Club

**GOLD Season**  
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# The way you speak now was shaped by what your ancestors ate

**CHRISTINA LARSON**  
AP Science Writer

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — The way most of us speak today is shaped in part by how long ago our ancestors gave up chewing tough, raw meat.

It's widely known that languages evolve as societies develop and change, but the sounds we utter are also shaped, literally, by the placement of our jaw — and that is influenced by how we chew our food, researchers report Thursday in the journal *Science*.

Language study often focuses on cultural factors, "but our work shows that language is also a biological phenomenon — you can't fully separate culture and biology," said Balthasar Bickel, a linguist at the University of Zurich and co-author of the new study.

The researchers analyzed Stone Age and modern skulls and created simulations of how different jaw placements allow our mouths to make different sounds. They analyzed a database of roughly 2,000 languages — more than a quarter of languages in ex-



This Jan. 8, 2003 file photo shows a reconstructed Neanderthal skeleton, right, and a modern human version of a skeleton, left, on display at the Museum of Natural History in New York.

Associated Press

istence today — to identify which sounds were more and less frequently used, and where.

Languages spoken by groups with hunter-gatherer societies in their more recent past are far less likely to use consonants used by longtime farming societies, the study found.

"Our anatomy actually

changed the types of sounds being incorporated into languages," Noreen von Cramon-Taubadel, an evolutionary anthropologist at the University of Buffalo who was not involved in the study, wrote in an email.

Before societies cultivated crops and learned to cook food, early humans chewed tough raw meat

— which was hard work on our jaws and teeth. Stone Age adult skulls don't look like modern skulls. These older skulls have upper and lower teeth closing directly on top of each other — whereas today most people have some degree of overbite, with the front teeth extending in front of bottom teeth when the mouth is closed.

"If you are raised on softer foods, you don't have the same kind of wear and tear on your bite that your ancestors had, so you keep an overbite," said Bickel.

Eating softer foods not only sets the jaw in a different fashion, but also changes which sounds are easily pronounced. In particular, it becomes much easier to say "f" and "v," which linguists call "labiodental" sounds.

(Try it. Put your upper and lower incisors — or "front teeth" — directly on top of each other and try say "favor." It's difficult.)

The researchers looked closely at 52 languages from what is called the Indo-European language group — including dialects

spoken from Iceland to India — and charted how the "f" and "v" sounds appeared in a rising number of languages over time. As more societies developed agriculture and traded in raw meat for softer fare — whether it's cooked meat and potatoes, or rice and stewed vegetables — these sounds became more common, the researchers found.

"New sounds get introduced into languages, and then are more widely adopted," said Steven Moran, also a linguist at the University of Zurich and co-author of the paper.

The notion that agriculture shaped language was first suggested decades ago by American linguist Charles Hockett, but he did not attempt to prove it.

Elan Dresher, a linguist at the University of Toronto who was not involved in the study, commended testing Hockett's theory, but said the research could be fine-tuned by looking at historical reconstructions of languages, rather than using language databases to make comparisons. □

# Indian Ocean science mission recovers key underwater drone



Submersibles sent to recover an ROV (Remotely Operated Vehicle) lost off the coast of the tiny island of Alphonse Seychelles, Wednesday March 13, 2019.

Associated Press

By **DAVID KEYTON** and **JERRY HARMER**

Associated Press

**ALPHONSE ISLAND, Seychelles (AP)** — A British-led marine scientific mission off the Seychelles succeeded on Thursday in retrieving a key underwater drone from the sea bed, where it had fallen after its cable was cut two days ago.

The camera-carrying drone is a vital piece of equipment for the Nekton Mission scientists as they explore the Indian Ocean depths. Two recovery attempts on Wednesday failed.

Pilot Jimmy Boesen called the success a welcome relief after two sleepless nights: "The mission is 50 percent not done if we didn't get it done. So it's a good one."

The loss of the Remotely Operated Vehicle, capable of reaching a depth of 500 meters (1,640 feet),

had caused scientific data collection to stop while efforts focused on its retrieval. The mission is on an unprecedented exploration of the Indian Ocean to document changes taking place beneath the waves that could affect billions of people in the surrounding region over the coming decades.

Mission director Oliver Steeds was relieved that the mission could now continue after the retrieval efforts had battled strong currents.

The mission has faced a number of mishaps: Bad weather forced a change of course. Fierce underwater currents have buffeted the submersibles, aborting dives.

The scientists on board the *Ocean Zephyr* now hope their luck has changed and that their mission to document the world's least-ex-

plored ocean can kick into high gear.

In a message to the mission on Thursday, the United Nations special envoy for the ocean, Peter Thomson, noted the "seminal importance" of such work.

"The ocean is in deep trouble," he wrote, "largely as a result of continuing planetary warming arising from our greenhouse gas emissions. We will be depending on global consensus on scientific findings to be the basis of our agreements on solutions and actions necessary to reverse the cycle of decline in which the ocean's health is currently caught." The Associated Press is the only news agency working with British scientists from the Nekton research team on its deep-sea mission. board and aerial footage. The seven-week expedition is expected to run until April 19. □

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## Savannah gearing up for profitable St. Patrick's Day weekend

By RUSS BYNUM  
Associated Press

**SAVANNAH, Ga. (AP)** — Park fountains are gushing with green-dyed water. Beer trucks are making deliveries on a constant loop. And thousands of tourists in gaudy green outfits will soon arrive for Savannah's biggest celebration of the year.

Georgia's oldest city is gearing up for the South's largest St. Patrick's Day parade this weekend. It's a 195-year-old tradition started by Irish immigrants to Savannah that has ballooned into one of the region's most popular street parties after Mardi Gras.

Streamers of cardboard shamrocks and green T-shirts with bawdy slogans were on display Wednesday outside bars and storefronts along Savannah's historic downtown riverfront. Street musician Marion May wore a large leprechaun hat as he played his flute for visitors strolling past a fountain filled with water stained a verdant shade of green.

"People from across the



Marion May wears a leprechaun hat while playing his flute next to a fountain of green-dyed water on the downtown riverfront of Savannah, Georgia, on Wednesday, March 13, 2019.

Associated Press

county, all crevices and cracks, are going to be coming here," said May, 71, who on St. Patrick's Day often sets up with his bucket for collecting tips in nearby Johnson Square. "If they're not Irish, they're going to be Irish for one day. Like me." Like New York and Chi-

cago, Savannah will hold its parade Saturday, the day before the traditional March 17 holiday.

Nobody performs any official crowd estimate in Savannah, but parade organizers in the past have figured some of the largest crowds exceeded 500,000.

Most of the area's 16,000 hotel rooms are booked, said Joe Marinelli, president of Visit Savannah, the city's tourism bureau.

"You partner terrific weather with a Saturday parade and we are expecting large crowds," Marinelli said. "And this is more than

just a two- or three-day weekend. It potentially could grow into a four- or five-day weekend for some of our visitors coming to town."

Spring-like temperatures in the 60s are forecast for St. Patrick's Day weekend. There's also a small chance for rain on Saturday, though parade organizers don't seem concerned.

"It's going to be a beautiful day," Bubba Edgerly, chairman of the Savannah St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee, assured reporters at a Wednesday news conference. "We've been praying at church."

For many business owners in downtown Savannah, St. Patrick's Day is typically the most profitable time of the year. That's especially true when the parade falls on a weekend, which won't happen again until 2024.

Melissa Swanson, owner of The Rail Pub in downtown Savannah, said customers are typically lined up down the block when she opens at 8 a.m. on parade days to serve breakfast with green grits and bloody marys. □

## Singer-songwriter Hozier stuns with sophomore album

By MARK KENNEDY  
Associated Press

Hozier, "Wasteland, Baby!" (Columbia)

For proof that Irish singer-songwriter Hozier has hit the big time, look no further than who he's singing with these days: Mavis Staples and Booker T. Jones.

Their soaring song — "Nina Cried Power" — is a fitting opening to the Grammy-nominated artist's second full-length album, "Wasteland, Baby!" It's a stunning 14-track collection that proves Hozier has suffered no sophomore slump.

It's assured, unrushed, complex, soulful and passionate, with his specific Irish stew of R&B, rock, gospel and folk. It's nourishing and substantive, a reminder that enduring music is possible in 2019.

Hozier — born Andrew Hozier-Byrne — emerged in 2013 with his anthem against religious hypocrisy

"Take Me to Church" and an excellent self-titled debut album that mixed confessional lyrics and progressive politics.

The new album kicks off in a similar vein, with Hozier, Jones and Staples paying tribute to such activist-artists as Nina Simone, Billie Holiday, James Brown, Marvin Gaye, John Lennon and Staples herself. "It's not the waking, it's the rising," Hozier sings.

Then it's on to his valentine to music itself with "Almost (Sweet Music)," which cleverly name-drops song titles from the likes of Duke Ellington and Chet Baker. Hozier then segues to the bedroom with the slinky "Movement," dripping with desire. Next is the fuzzy guitar-led, blissed-out gem "No Plan."

By this point it's almost too rich to take this Hozier meal. But suck it up, because next is a pure songwriting masterpiece in "Shrike," which is



This cover image released by Columbia Records shows "Wasteland, Baby!" by Hozier.

Associated Press

titled after a bird that impales insects on thorns. "Remember me, love, when I am reborn/As the shrike

to your sharp and glorious thorn," Hozier sings.

Although a few of the later, weaker songs might have

been culled, there are many more joys to discover on the album, including "Be," a gospel-flecked call to stem environmental disaster.

"Wasteland, Baby!" is filled with dread and doom, but also — as the cheeky title suggests — humor and light. Hozier returns to sing about the joy of music in the sunny "To Noise Making (Sing)," which has references to Prince and The Waterboys.

Hozier's lyrics include everyone from Orpheus to Fred Astaire and plenty of bird imagery. Every song but one was written exclusively by him and he plays guitar, organ, synth and electric piano. He also supplies bells, snaps, claps, beatbox, tambourine, shaker, and, on a few songs, he's playfully credited as "Sex Weasel." After delivering on this album, Hozier can call himself whatever he likes. □

# In success for 'Captain Marvel,' a defeat for trolls



This image released by Disney-Marvel Studios shows Brie Larson in a scene from "Captain Marvel."

Associated Press

By JAKE COYLE  
Associated Press  
NEW YORK (AP) — Captain Marvel possesses superhuman strength, cosmic awareness and, it turns out, the ability to vanquish trolls. Marvel's "Captain Marvel," the superhero factory's first movie fronted solely by a female hero, last weekend notched the sixth largest global opening ever and in five days of release has already sold \$524.1 million tickets worldwide, Disney said Wednesday. That was despite the efforts of a vocal minority to sabotage the movie's release in a campaign to lower audience scores and disseminate false information about the film's star, Brie Larson.

It's a playbook borrowed from the political realm and brought into the movie theater. And the movies that have drawn such attention have, more times than not, starred women in franchises previously dominated by males. But after similar campaigns against "Ghostbusters" and "The Last Jedi," Hollywood studios are fighting back, as are sites like Rotten Tomatoes and YouTube.

Paul Feig's 2016 female-led "Ghostbusters" remake, which Donald Trump himself spoke out against, was among the first films to be targeted by users rating it lowly on sites like the Internet Movie Database (IMDb) before the film was even released. On YouTube, it was the most disliked trailer ever.

A similar strategy was employed on Rian Johnson's "Star Wars Episode VII: The Last Jedi," which — like "Ghostbusters" — had, and continues to have, genuine detractors who simply didn't like the movie. But there were concerted efforts to amplify criticism of "The Last Jedi," which notably expanded the "Star Wars" universe with new heroes like Laura Dern's resistance leader and Kelly Marie Tran's maintenance worker. Tran eventually deleted her Instagram account after months of harassment.

So when Johnson and Feig saw similar attempts being made ahead of the release of "Captain Marvel," they recognized the handiwork.

"Pretty much the new 'Certified Fresh' badge," said Johnson, linking to an article about review bombing on "Captain Marvel." "What a sad, sad pathetic group of people are who organize to do things like this," said Feig.

The amplified backlashes to both "The Last Jedi" (which opened strong but faded) and "Ghostbusters" (which disappointed altogether) appeared to hurt the films' bottom lines.

But the tide may be turning. The same Facebook group that organized to vote down "The Last Jedi" also went after Ryan Coogler's "Black Panther." That time, though, both Facebook and Rotten Tomatoes moved to counter the group, which was removed from Facebook. "Black Panther" became the third highest grossing film of all time domestically, not accounting for inflation.

And "Captain Marvel," which drew a majority male audience (55 percent), similarly showed no signs of any ill effect.

"If those trolls had any negative impact on the box office, somebody point it out to me because I just don't see it," said Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for Comscore. "The trolls, they're not going to derail a movie like this. For the fans, they love Marvel, they love the brand. Other than a terrible movie, nothing would dissuade the Marvel fans from coming out and seeing a film."

Marvel, whose 21 films have earned a combined \$18 billion in global box office, is indeed about as unassailable as any studio ever has been. "Captain Marvel" was also cunningly positioned as a need-to-see appetizer to "Avengers: Endgame," due out April 26.

But "Captain Marvel" found itself in the crosshairs with some largely in response

to Larson's advocacy for diversity in film and in those who write about it. A USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative study last year found that, for the 100 top grossing films in 2017, 77.8 percent of the critics counted on Rotten Tomatoes were male and 86 percent were white.

At the time of the study's release, Larson said: "I do not need a 40-year-old white dude to tell me what didn't work for him about 'A Wrinkle in Time.'" Larson later said she, after noticing that critics reviewing movies "appeared to be overwhelmingly white male" decided to make her press interviews "more inclusive." "This film is about trying to put in as many little revolutions as possible," she told AV Club. "And as many little nods to what that experience is like, being a woman, so that other people could feel less alone."

Online critics exaggerated her words in videos like one titled "Brie Larson hates white men." Others said her character didn't smile enough in promotional materials. Larson responded with a photo of giant grins superimposed on previous male Marvel heroes.

But perhaps more importantly, steps were taken to mitigate any troll effect on "Captain Marvel." Two studio executives who spoke anonymously because they weren't authorized to speak about their anti-troll efforts, said they've become more adept and prepared for combating organized negativity around a release. There are no more sneak attacks. And the avenues for manipulating audience perception are dwindling.

YouTube, where anti-Larson videos proliferated ahead of the film's opening, chose to categorize "Brie Larson" as a news search, not a general one. The algorithm tweak, first initiated to combat conspiracy videos after the 2017 Las Vegas music festival shooting, pushed videos from news and entertainment outlets up, and rants like "Brie Larson is Ruining Marvel!" down. □

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<p><b>CAPTIVE STATE</b> MON-THU &amp; SUN 7:10   9:30 FRI-SAT 7:10   9:30   11:50 <b>[PG-13]</b></p>	<p><b>FIVE FEET APART</b> MON-THU 4:15   6:45   9:15 FRI 4:15   6:45   9:15   11:45 SAT 1:45   4:15   6:45   9:15   11:45 SUN 1:45   4:15   6:45   9:15 <b>[PG-13]</b></p>
<p><b>WONDER PARK</b> MON-THU 4:50   6:45   8:40 FRI 4:50   6:45   8:40   10:35 SAT 1:00   2:55   4:50   6:45   8:40   10:35 SUN 1:00   2:55   4:50   6:45   8:40 <b>[PG]</b></p>	<p><b>THEY SHALL NOT GROW OLD</b> MON-FRI 3:50   6:00 SAT-SUN 1:40   3:50   6:00 <b>[R]</b></p>
<p><b>CAPTAIN MARVEL</b> WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES MON-THU &amp; SUN 8:10 FRI-SAT 8:10   10:50</p> <p><b>CXC</b> MON-THU 6:00   8:20 FRI 6:00   8:20   11:20 SAT 3:20   6:00   8:20   11:20 SUN 3:20   6:00   8:20</p> <p><b>CARIBBEAN CINEMAS VIP</b> MON-THU 3:55   4:45   6:35   7:25   9:20 FRI 3:55   4:45   6:35   7:25   9:20   10:10 SAT 1:15   2:05   3:55   4:45   6:35   7:25   9:20   10:10 SUN 1:15   2:05   3:55   4:45   6:35   7:25   9:20 <b>[PG-13]</b></p>	<p><b>A MADEA FAMILY FUNERAL</b> WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES MON-THU &amp; SUN 6:50   9:10 FRI-SAT 6:50   9:10   11:30 <b>[PG-13]</b></p>
<p><b>DRAGON</b> WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES MON-FRI 4:55 SAT-SUN 2:40   4:55 <b>[PG]</b></p>	<p><b>¡HE MATADO A MI MARIDO!</b> SPANISH MON-FRI 4:35 SAT-SUN 2:20   4:35 <b>[PG-13]</b></p>

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# Lori Loughlin's arrest makes for unlikely drama for Hallmark

By LYNN ELBER  
Associated Press

**LOS ANGELES (AP)** — The Hallmark Channel brings to mind holidays, happy endings and now, incongruously, a college admissions scam that involves one of the channel's favored actresses. Lori Loughlin's surprising arrest this week poses a challenge for the family-friendly brand with heartland roots.

The allegation that Loughlin paid bribes to gain her daughters' college admissions is unconnected to Hallmark, but her career and the channel have become intertwined. She's among its so-called "Christmas queens" who top line a slate of popular holiday movies, and also stars in the ongoing "Garage Sale Mysteries" movies and the series "When Calls the Heart." "It's a feel-good, family values-type channel, and obviously scandal is the opposite of that," said Atlanta-based market strategist Laura Ries. "Will people get past that to love the character on screen and not the real person?"

While Hallmark has taken a wait-and-see attitude on Loughlin, there's more at issue than whether her appeal survives. "When Calls the Heart" tapes in Canada, and a judge ordered Loughlin's passport to be surrendered in December after grudgingly allowing her to cross the border for work until then.

Loughlin has not yet entered a plea in the case, and her attorney declined comment Wednesday after her first appearance in a Los Angeles federal court. The actress isn't exclusive to Hallmark. She's reprised her role as Aunt Becky for Netflix's "Fuller House" reboot of the popular series that originated in 1987 on ABC. But the sitcom represents a fraction of the streamer's flood of programs, while Loughlin has occupied an increasing amount of Hallmark real estate since she starred in "Meet My Mom" in 2010.

She's proved a reliable performer. Her 2018 holiday movie, "Homegrown



In this Oct. 4, 2017 file photo, actress Lori Loughlin arrives at the 5th annual People Magazine "Ones To Watch" party in Los Angeles.

Christmas," was the most-watched non-sports cable program the week it aired. In February, the season six premiere of "When Calls the Heart" was watched by a series-best 2.5 million viewers, putting it behind only "The Walking Dead" in Sunday night cable dramas.

"They definitely have a formula and you do have to follow the formula. And if you don't, they rein you back in and say, 'You have to follow. This is our format, this is what we do,'" Loughlin said of the Christmas movies last year in an interview with The Associated Press. She said the rigidity chafes a bit but called the result "heartwarming," adding, "You go to bed and you don't have any bad dreams."

The New York City native with a sunny smile proved a good fit for the channel that specializes in romantic dramas and comedies with a wholesome touch, while her media-friendly personality allowed her to expertly tout her shows on her website and in TV appearances.

Then came Tuesday's bombshell government allegation that Loughlin and her husband, fashion designer Mossimo Giannulli, were among more than 30 parents who paid a consultant to ensure their off-

spring's place in college with bribes and falsified exams. Prosecutors allege the couple paid \$500,000 to have their daughters labeled as crew-team recruits at the University of Southern California, although neither is a rower.

Felicity Huffman ("Desperate Housewives," "American Crime") was among other prominent parents, including a lawyer, doctor and hedge fund manager, indicted in the scam.

SheriLynn DiGiovanna, webmaster for "The Hearties" site created by "When Calls the Heart" admirers,

called Loughlin's alleged actions "shocking and sad" in an email but is standing by the drama and what it represents.

"My personal opinion is that we need shows modeling good behavior, like "When Calls the Heart" does, now more than ever so I won't stop watching. While extremely saddened and disappointed, I separate the personal lives of the actors from the writers and producers who are bringing community-minded and family-friendly shows to TV," DiGiovanna said.

Hallmark, initially silent

when the allegations were announced, issued a statement Wednesday, the day Loughlin surrendered to authorities. "We are aware of the situation and are monitoring developments as they arise," the channel said. It's owned by Crown Media, whose parent is Hallmark Cards Inc., the Kansas City, Missouri, enterprise started in 1910. It has fostered local and state ties and shown a resistance to any hint of controversy. It's quickly moved to respond to any flare-ups, such as removing a gift wrap from circulation after one person complained of seeing a swastika in its pattern.

Misbehavior may be unusual in the Hallmark world but is nothing new for Hollywood, with the fallout from sex and other scandals affecting celebrities and companies. But the white-collar crime Loughlin is accused of is akin to that of another unlikely scofflaw: Martha Stewart, who was convicted in 2004 of obstructing justice and lying to the government about a stock sale.

"She lost trust," said Robert Passikoff, president of Brand Keys, a New York-based brand research firm. So did her empire, despite Stewart's efforts to separate her personal actions from it: "Wrong — you're the brand," he said. □

Associated Press

## Million-selling 'Questioners' team readies new picture book

Associated Press

**NEW YORK (AP)** — The million-selling "Questioners" team of author Andrea Beaty and illustrator David Roberts has an Election Day special planned.

Abrams Children's Books announced Monday that "Sofia Valdez, Future Prez" will come out November 5. The picture book tells the story of Sofia Valdez, a Mexican-American in second grade who sets out to convert a dangerous landfill into a park — if only City Hall will allow it. The publisher is calling the book a story of "standing up for what you believe in," whatever the chances. Beaty and Roberts are known for the popular "Questioners" series, which includes the picture books "Rosie Revere, Engineer" and "Ada Twist, Scientist." The Questioners chapter book "Ada Twist and the Perilous Pants" comes out in April. □



This undated image provided by Abrams Children's Books shows the cover of "Sofia Valdez, Future Prez" by author Andrea Beaty and illustrator David Roberts.

Associated Press

# Cambodian genocide documented in victims' preserved clothes

By SOPHENG CHEANG and GRANT PECK, Associated Press

**PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (AP)** — As a leader in the field of textile conservation, Julia Brennan has worked to preserve many glamorous and historic articles of clothing, from a kimono presented to Babe Ruth, to singer James Brown's jumpsuit, to a British aristocrat's coronation gown.

Her profession, however, has also brought her into contact with humanity's darkest moments, including genocides in Rwanda and Cambodia.

Brennan recently began a project at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum in Cambodia's capital, Phnom Penh, where the Khmer Rouge in the late 1970s tortured as many as 17,000 men, women and children before killing them. The museum's macabre artifacts include torture devices and displays of skulls.

The most haunting display comprises photo portraits that were kept as part of the meticulous record-keeping ordered by Tuol Sleng's Khmer Rouge commander, who in 2012 was sentenced to life in prison for crimes against humanity, murder and torture.

But only a small amount of victims' clothing is displayed; most was stowed away in nooks and crannies, untouched since the museum was established in 1980. Museum director Chhay Visoth felt it was urgent to register and preserve these holdings, and he sought Brennan's help in



In this Feb. 5, 2018, photo, leading textile conservationist Julia Brennan holds a scarf from a victim of the former Khmer Rouge as she inspects artifacts at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

Associated Press

2014.

The 59-year-old Brennan was born to American parents in Indonesia, where her father was on a Jesuit scholarship teaching at universities and doing research. She was raised in northern Thailand, where her father worked for the U.S. government, and when he later worked on a European Union arms control project in Cambodia, Brennan became acquainted with that country's culture. Brennan was keenly interested in the Tuol Sleng project, and the U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh eventually gave a \$55,000 grant to support it.

She then began her work to jump-start the preservation of 3,000-5,000 articles of prisoners' clothing and train Cambodian staff to

care for them.

Brennan worked on a similar project for the past two years in Rwanda, where long-standing rivalries between two tribes led to the killings of an estimated 800,000 people in 1994. She helped to preserve clothing at the Nyamata church, where more than 10,000 people were slaughtered as they sought shelter from marauding mobs. The church is now a memorial site, with the clothing an integral part of its exhibition. The power of clothing in documenting genocide is widely recognized by experts. The collection at the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum in Poland includes 390 striped inmates' uniforms and 246 Jewish prayer shawls, according to Pawel Sawicki, a press officer for the memorial.

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., holds a variety of items of clothing as well. One of the most striking exhibits is of 4,000 shoes from some of the victims of the Majdanek concentration camp in Poland.

"The exhibit very simply shows the magnitude of Nazi murder while simultaneously allowing the viewer to individualize the horror," Jane Klinger, the Holocaust museum's chief conservator, said in an email.

to identify it for inventory, "then just to surface clean carefully with a vacuum or a soft brush, and then the dirt can be saved as part of the record and some of the surface soiling will be loosened."

Treatment doesn't end there. In tropical places like Cambodia, there's a lot of mildew and mold as well as live insects to deal with. To try to protect the material for the long term, it is put into "micro climates" in which the relative humidity can be reduced. Brennan said she developed this system during her work in Rwanda, putting the items in dry storage boxes with desiccants, pellets normally used in the agriculture industry.

Kho Chenda, a 28-year-old staff member at Tuol Sleng, has taken Brennan's preservation lessons to heart. She said what she's learned is vital because of the museum's mission to teach the horrific legacy of the Khmer Rouge.

"If that clothing gets too old and worn out, then the evidence it offers will be gone, and when you talk to the younger generation, they will not believe you," she said.

Kong Kuntheary, another of Brennan's students, echoed the sentiment.

"This clothing is really important evidence, so we have to preserve it to make sure that even in 100 or 200 years, it will not have disappeared," said the 52-year-old employee of the National Museum in Phnom Penh. □



In this Feb. 5, 2018, photo, a tourist views piles of clothing from the victims executed by the Khmer Rouge regime at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

Associated Press



In this April 9, 2015, file photo, tourists view portraits of victims executed by the Khmer Rouge regime at the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

Associated Press